

SHREE SHREE MA ANANDAMAYEE

Volume : VII



Gurupriya Devi

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VOLUME VII
(Translated From Bengali)



GURUPRIYA DEVI

SHREE SHREE ANANDAMAYEE SANGHA
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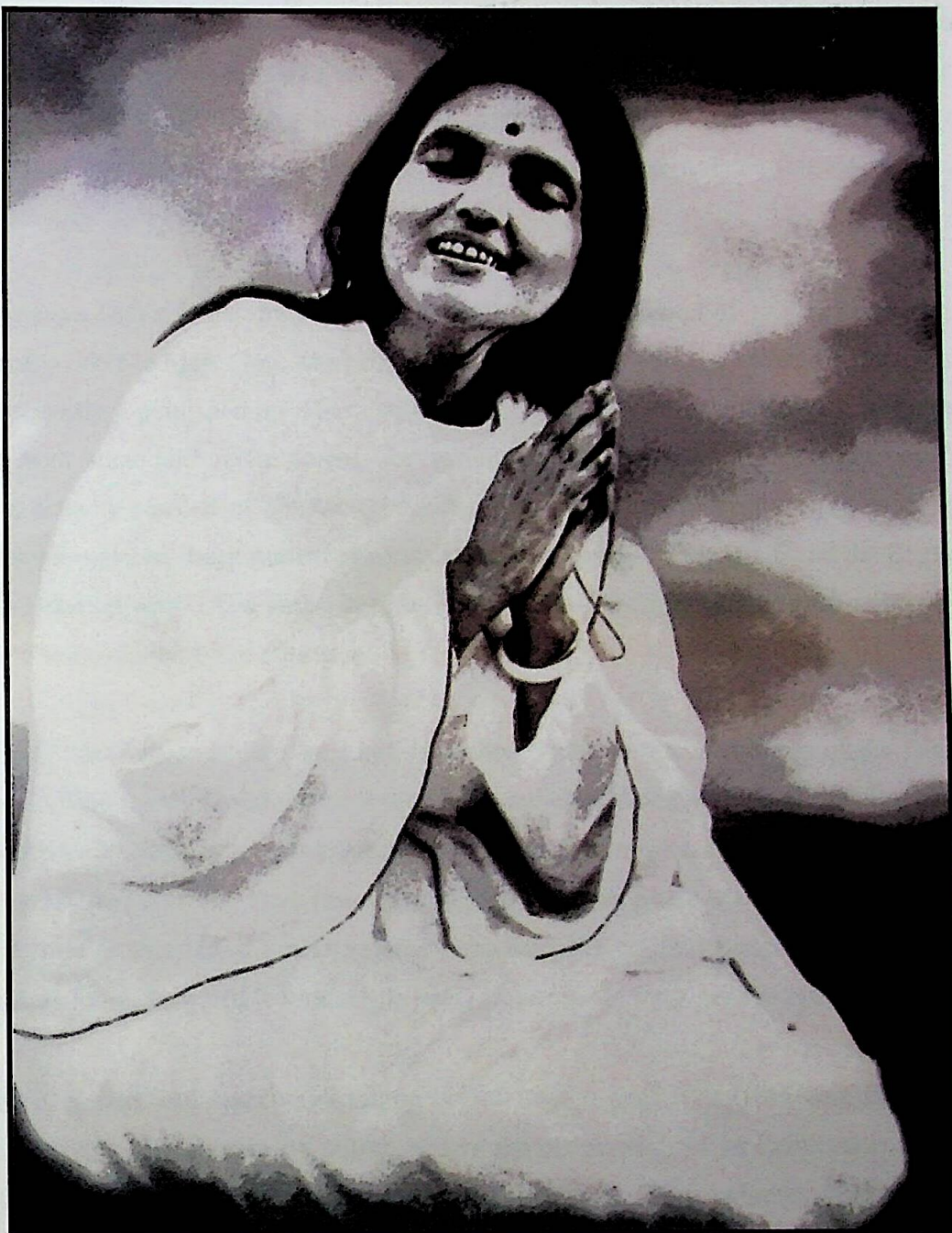
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Shree Shree Ma singing in *Bhava*



FOREWORD

We are happy and feel fortunate and blessed to be able to bring out in English the Volume VII of Pujya Didi Shree Gurupriya Devi's invaluable Diary on *Matrileela, Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee*. Most of the pages of Didi's Diary were published during her lifetime in seventeen Volumes in Bengali, Vol. VII being in two parts, and she has left behind some volumes of her annals in manuscript, which are now being serially published in the Ashram journal. *Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Amrit Varta*.

Gurupriya Didi's Diary from Vol. I to Vol. XVII spans a period of 39 years approximately, from December 1925 to May 1964. The original Bengali series of the Diary from Vol. I to Vol. XVII were subsequently published in Hindi translation, but the text was abridged at places and distributed with some difference among the volumes, with the result that the present English Volume VII actually consists of the text of the Bengali. Vol. VI, to the exclusion of some opening pages which have already been published as the concluding pages of the Hindi and the English Vol. VI. We have started with a few dates from the last pages of the previous English volume, just in order to lend some clarity to the sequence.

During the '80's and '90's, an English version of the first few Volumes of the Diary were brought out as Vols I – VI, based on the text and volume-classification of the Hindi version. We are thankful to Mrs. Tara Kini, who in her beautiful, lucid English translated these volumes.

After all the years that have passed, prompted by Shree Shree Ma's *Kheyal*, we have now made an attempt to translate the next volume right from the original Bengali, retaining each and every detail, and have supplied it with ample notes wherever we felt a need to clarify a point.

This task involved team work taking no less than a year. The Governing Body of Shree Shree Anandamayee Sangha, at the outset, sought the cooperation of its Publication Division for carrying further the long suspended work of translating these Diary volumes in English. After a brisk search for a translator, the name suggested was that of Col. Dilip Guha, a staunch devotee of Shree Shree Ma, who at present resides in the Varanasi Ashram. He took it up enthusiastically in a spirit of dedication, and swiftly completed the translation by July, 2015.

The manuscript was then sent to Dr Krishna Banerjee, a member of the Editorial Board, for

editing. After the first round of editing, the typed script was forwarded by email to Mr. Christopher Pegler (U.K.), who maintains a website on Shree Shree Ma, and Swami Brahmananda Giri (U.S.A.) for their opinions and suggestions. Thus began a veritable cycle of reviewing and editing, which took quite a few revisions. After each round, the script was printed in hard copy by Shree Alok Ranjan Choudhury, a member of the office staff at Mata Anandamayee Hospital, Varanasi and then the hard copy was given over to Col Guha to review. We are much beholden to each and every member of this team and thankfully acknowledge their valuable contribution. The original Bengali text of this volume is not divided in chapters; it follows the pattern of day-to-day diary writing. In fact, apart from a few initial volumes, the latter ones are not arranged in chapters. Vol. I is more like a book of memoirs rather than of daily chronicles; in composing this volume, Gurupriya Didi invoked the reminiscences of her recent past and put them conveniently under chapters. The chapters of the other few volumes do not have headings. We have arranged the English Vol. VII in five Chapters, providing instead of headings a short list of the main contents.

As a reference guide, we have furnished a list of the events, following the paradigm of the original. The only difference is that while Gurupriya Didi has arranged the events in the Bengali alphabetical order, against a column of page numbers, we have put them in the chronological order (the alphabetical order would be different in English) along with the corresponding dates. This table of contents, so re-arranged, will remain valid in case there are reprints of the Volume in the future with different page numbers.

In the matter of tallying the Gregorian dates with the days of the week (provided by Didi along with the dates of the Bengali calendar), we used a calendar of the year 1938, available on a specific website. The Glossary of relevant words and phrases in Sanskrit and other Indian languages was constructed from a Glossary of an earlier volume, together with notes from the current volume.

There are four *stotras* in this volume which spontaneously emanated from Shree Shree Ma's lips and were noted down by Shree Abhay on the spot. These *stotras*, uttered in a state of *bhava* at various times, are not translatable on the whole, though they contain many single words and phrases in the recognized form of Sanskrit grammar. As Pt. Gopinath Kaviraj has observed, they are in a pre-historic, early Vedic form of *Devabhasha*, the language of the Gods, in which *bhava* and *bhasha*, thought and speech, are an inseparable whole.

These cryptic utterances seem to be symbolic; many of them are onomatopoeic (sound

suggesting sense), carrying power-vibrations like mantras. Of all the 4/5 hymns noted down by Pujya Bhaiji in his *Matri-Darshan* (Bengali), only one was interpreted by Shree Ram Thakur, whose yogic intuition could penetrate its mystery. His interpretation appears in English in *Mother As Revealed to Me*.

We have decided to publish the hymns of the present volume in ordinary English characters within the book for expert scholars and worthy recipients of Shree Shree Ma's grace, to whom they may yield their inner significance.

In the absence of recording facilities, Abhayda tried to jot down the fluently flowing utterances, missing out a few here and there (marked by three dots), depending on his auditory impressions. The gaps between words and phrases indicate pauses and the full stop appears, presumably, where Ma seemed to have concluded a sentence.

This project has been financed by an anonymous donor from the U.S.A., whose earnest wish it was that more of Gurupriya Didi's Diaries should appear in English. Other than this, occasional but liberal help of various kinds came our way at times of need from a number of Shree Shree Ma's devotees, who, however, would like to remain anonymous. We are sure that Shree Shree Ma, the Omniscient, has showered Her blessings on all of them.

We have collected relevant photographs mainly from the Ashram archives, from the photo files of the Ratna Press and from the website: www.anandamayee.org. We are much beholden to all those who have proffered help in this and other matters and whose kind cooperation we have taken for granted. May Shree Shree Ma grant each one of them Her choicest Blessings.

We humbly offer our obeisance again and again at the Lotus Feet of Shree Shree Ma, whose divine *Kheyal* has always been the guiding force behind our efforts and whose infinite, unstinted Grace has made this venture a success against all odds.

To conclude, we earnestly pray to Shree Shree Ma for Her forgiveness for all our shortcomings.

*"ajnanat vismriter bhrantya yannyunam adhikam kritam
purnam bhavatu tat sarvam tvatprasadan Maheshwari"*

"O Supreme Goddess, if on account of our ignorance, forgetting or misunderstanding the

fault of doing less or overdoing has taken place in our efforts, then kindly let all that be amended and brought to perfection by Your Grace."

Guru Purnima
19 July 2016 Tuesday
Varanasi

Jai Ma
-Publishers

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CHAPTER - I

(9 May - 26 July)

9 May 1938 Monday

Today we received a reply telegram saying that Ma is keeping well, but there is no change in Her *bhava*. She wants us to work the way She has told us. Just today we started out for Calcutta by train at 6 p.m.

10 May 1938 Tuesday

We arrived in Calcutta at 8 a.m. After dropping Mejdi¹ en route we went to Shachidada's place and talked about Ma and Bholanath until quite late. Then we accompanied Didima to her place. Today is Ekadashi² We had breakfast at Didima's, then visited a few people on the way at the doorsteps of their homes, getting to Birla's Shiv Temple around 1 p.m. At dusk Ramtaranbabu, Gopinathbabu, Shachibabu and Yatishbabu visited us along with their families; our conversation lasted until 11 p.m.

Everything seems to be in flux and our concerns dominated all conversations. Shachidada informed us that a letter came from Nareshbabu from Dehradun. In it he mentioned that Bholanath's body had been taken to Haridwar and given *Salil Samadhi*³ and that there remains no change in Ma's *bhava*. There is no other news.

We heard from Yatishdada's mother that a few days back her younger daughter Butu dreamt she had gone to a Kali temple. In the temple she saw that Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee was sitting with Her legs folded in Vajrasana next to the idol of Kali. The priest gave flowers to Butu for the puja, and when Butu uttered the mantras and offered the flowers at the feet of Ma Kali, she saw all the flowers falling at the feet of Ma Anandamayee. Butu was bewildered and thought, "How is it that I am offering flowers at the feet of Kali and at the same time they are falling at the feet of Ma Anandamayee?" Again she said the mantras mentally concentrating hard and offered the flowers at the feet of Kali thinking this time Kali Ma would accept her offerings, but then again she saw her offerings falling at the feet of Ma Anandamayee. In this way, her doubt was cleared and on seeing this she woke up from her dream.

¹ The second elder sister among three or more.

² The eleventh phase of the moon, considered auspicious for rituals like fasting etc. Brahmacharis, widows and persons observing spiritual discipline take simple, sattvik food on Ekadashi. Didi and others breakfasted at Didima's because they were not to take other kinds of food at other places.

³ Internment in water.

At night Shachidada came. He said, "From a letter sent by Naresh from Dehradun to his brother Bhupesh we learned that they took Bholanath's body at 2 a.m. from there and set out on their journey. Then on reaching Haridwar, they accorded it a *salil samadhi*. There is no change in Ma's *bhava*. No other news is there."

I remembered that during the Haridwar Kumbh, one day at around midnight, when everyone else was sleeping, I was with Ma. Suddenly Ma told me, "Go, call Bholanath." I did so and brought him to Ma. I was standing outside and could not hear what She told Bholanath. But from the next day on Bholanath was telling everyone, "You all will not have me for long. See what I do this *Sankranti*⁴." My guess was that Ma must have told him something along these lines. Shankarananda Swami told Ma, "Babaji is talking like this." Ma said, "Is he saying this on his own? Is he not saying the obvious? Last night he was told so much."

Whatever Bholanath might say he really could not accomplish much. Once in Dehradun when Bholanath was not well, Ma was sitting in Her room with Phanibabu, Bhupatidada and many of us, when the topic about Bholanath came up. Ma said, "When one is told to do something and one promises to do so, if one does not act accordingly there will inevitably be suffering from your point of view⁵. At times he does not listen, preferring to have his own way. See, while at the Haridwar Khumbh, at midnight he was called and was told certain things, he replied, 'Let me see.' But actually he did not do anything. When talking to him I gathered that he would not keep his word, in spite of what he was told. I can see that even if one does not keep one's word, there is always some effect left on one's mind and body⁶. It is like leaving an impression. And again, do you know how it is? If there is a *Kheyal* for something, it must be said. It is like when you have saliva in your mouth you have to spit it out -- just like that, what else to say? Results are bound to occur."

It seems that Bholanath at some point realized this. I saw one night when he was writhing in pain and suffering extremely from his illness, he called for Ma. As Ma entered his room he said, "Forgive me." Another day Ma called me aside and said, "Can you see? Bholanath does not have the sacred thread around his neck⁷."

Some time after, I remembered Ma narrating the following story (about Kailas) to me: "For a while Parvati had wanted to get *diksha* (initiation) from Bholanath. Standing at Lake Mansarovar, Bholanath was giving a mantra to Parvati; this body was also there for some time. Then from the lips of this body mantras started emanating and as a *Kheyal* arose, I told Bholanath, 'See, vedic

⁴ Transit of the sun from one zodiacal sign to the next.

⁵ From Ma's point of view there was neither enjoyment nor suffering.

⁶ Some positive effect of the very thought of doing some thing good, though the act does not happen to take place.

⁷ During the ritual of *sannyasa diksha*, a person gives up all possessions and symbols of caste, creed etc., including the sacred thread.

mantras are emanating from my lips, will you listen to them? You are already wearing ochre clothes." Then Bholanath said, 'When I was in Uttar Kashi, I learned the mantras of *sannyasa* and many more.' Hearing that, this body kept quiet. Then when this body began to walk and the mantras were flowing forth, immediately Bholanath said, 'Oh! Oh! this is a *sannyasa* mantra!' and with great joy and concentration he listened to the mantra carefully. Because this happened in this way and at that place, Bholanath had given himself a name pertaining to the *bhava* of '*Eko Brahma dvitityo nasti*' (Brahma is one and there is no second); Bholanath now has that *sannyasa* name.⁸ Later on during the Haridwar Kumbh when, at midnight what had happened at Manasarovar was discussed, he was asked to perform the rituals of *sannyasa*. So he went by himself and performed the rituals and returned saying, 'I have completed the *kriyas* of *sannyasa*.' He was then told, 'If you can try to live in the ways of a wandering sadhu, it would be beneficial.' That he could not do." Recollecting this much, I understood that this was the reason for his *Salil Samadhi*⁹. Ma went on to say that Bholanath had expressed a desire to be initiated into *sannyasa* by the Tirtha Sampradaya (one of the ten orders of *sannyasa*). Later on when in Dehradun he was sent to get initiation from the Tirtha Sampradaya, but he was not successful.

11 May 1938 Wednesday

We received two detailed letters from Bhupatidada. He wrote one letter to Shachidada and another to me. He wrote to me, "Whatever had to happen has happened, what will happen in the future we cannot say now. I do not know if you have any idea of this, but from five days prior to Pitaji's demise, Ma started visiting his room every hour and nursed him. (For two-three days we ourselves were witness to this). At the time of his death Ma was again at his bedside sitting near his head and doing some *kriyas* by passing Her hand from his *brahmatalu*¹⁰ down to his forehead back and forth repeatedly until he breathed his last. There was absolutely no change in Ma's expression nor did She look perturbed. After Bholanath's demise, Ma told us the story about his *sannyasa diksha* on the way to Kailas and revealed his *sannyasa* name. Ma said that She had already told you this once before."

In his letter to Shachidada, Bhupatidada wrote, "Bholanath received *sannyasa* mantra from Ma at Manasarovar. The name Ma gave to him was *Tibbatananda Tirtha*. On 6 May 1938 at 9:15 p.m. Baba's soul left his body. He was around 56 or 57 years old. The same night Hariram,

⁸ Bholanathji's *sannyasa* name: *Tibbatananda Tirtha*

⁹ *Salil Samadhi* or *Jal Samadhi*: the words *Salil* and *Jal* are used interchangeably, meaning "water". This ritual is the immersion of the deceased *sannyasi's* body in the holy waters of the Ganges or one of the other sacred rivers in India; it is a special ritual meant only for *sannyasis*.

¹⁰ The top of the head, the seat of the highest *Chakra*, *Sahasrara*

Yogeshdada, Sadananda, Shanti and I took his body to Haridwar and gave him *Jal Samadhi*¹¹, then returned to Dehradun. There is no change in Ma's *bhava*: the vermilion on the head, the white conch bangles --- nothing has changed.¹² Just as before, She still has a smiling face, the same way of talking, eating and so forth. There is absolutely no change. She is imperturbable as ever. Ma says, 'When was I ever a wife, in the real sense, that I can now be widowed? But, I am ready to adjust to the way you all want me to. Know that I am always the same.' So, do not be worried about Ma. In keeping with the traditional rituals for *sannyasis*, on the 16th day following Bholanathji's passing (21 May), we will have a *bhandara* here and at Haridwar." Many more details followed.

At night, Shachidada brought a card written by Yogeshdada to Keshtobabu. On it he had written, "Early in the morning on the day of his death, Baba expressed his wish to eat rice and Ma Herself supervised the preparation of mashed cooked rice, mixed with lentil soup and had it sent to Baba. He asked, 'Has Ma eaten?' We said, 'No.' He then said, 'First you feed Ma'. Ma went to the room and said, 'All right, give me a little'. She took a tiny morsel and then Baba said, 'Ma, feed me a little now.' Ma complied and his face brightened up and in that moment it seemed he would get better. Baba is now addressing Ma as Ma and She responds, 'Yes, Ma is here, why?' and goes closer to him. On the day of Baba's death Ma was sitting at Baba's bedside near his head from sunset on. At 9 p.m. She asked us to start singing kirtan. We did so and it was after this that Baba left his body. We took his body to Haridwar in a bus and immersed it in the Neeldhara stream of the Ganga at 3 a.m. and then returned to Dehradun."

12 May 1938 Thursday

Nothing particularly noteworthy today.

13 May 1938 Friday

A letter from Yogeshdada arrived and in it he wrote, "Two to three hours before Bholanath's death Ma asked him, 'Do you remember the *sannyasa* mantra?' Baba replied, 'Yes'." Yogeshdada further wrote that Ma said Bholanath's passing should not cause anyone to waiver from their particular tasks and that all should carry on with determination the repetition of "Name", performance of *Yajna* and other such related activities concerning *sadhana*." Ma's instructions are as irrevocable as God's -- I keep noticing this all the time and it is gaining momentum day by day. She says, "Get on with whatever you have to do and do not get distracted." This is why She has sent

¹¹ see footnote 9

¹² The reference is to the tradition in Bengal for widowed women who remove their bangles and cease marking the parting in their hair with red vermilion. According to the orthodox tradition, Bengali Hindu women begin wearing conch shell bangles and the use of vermilion from the day of their wedding and give up the same when widowed.

Her orders to us today itself. Birth and death are the same for Her so for Her no scheduled work should be hampered by these. Death is a daily event in creation. I am in awe of Her: She is more fierce than thunder and at the same time softer than a flower. Also, without this softness She would be incomplete.¹³ Moreover, how could we survive otherwise? Repeatedly She says, "All that is happening through this body is for you all, otherwise there is no reason for it to be here." The truth of these sweet words of Hers brings everyone to Her Lotus Feet.

14 May 1938 Saturday

Today we set out for Dhaka. Ma says we must get to Dhaka while the celebrations¹⁴ are going on. On the night of third Jyeshtha¹⁵ the *Tithi Puja* will be performed.

15 May 1938 Sunday

We arrived in Dhaka today. Jatu and Kanu met us at the station. Since they are not able to be in the company of Ma very often, they compensate for it and feel happy by having us around them. In this happiness, their respect and love for Ma is expressed.

They were very sad over Bholanath's demise and kept reminiscing and repeating stories about his last visit when he shared so much happiness with all here. The celebrations are being carried out as per orthodox rules and according to schedule. The ladies gather in the afternoon and sing kirtan for a long time. Continuous repetition of the "Name" is in progress and at least one person must keep it going so there is never a pause. The ladies sing kirtan very well until after dusk. The kirtan room gets filled with people. The ladies look beautiful as they move around in a circle in the evening clapping and playing the cymbals in accompaniment to the kirtan. Some of them sit in the centre of the circle and keep repeating the "Name". Sandal paste *tika* is on their foreheads. The gentlemen are outside during this period while the ladies carry on with their kirtan, chanting the 'Name' in absolute abandon and gaiety. The sound of the sweet female voices singing the name of "Ma" brings delight to the heart; such nice and regular kirtan done by the ladies of Dhaka cannot be witnessed elsewhere. This is a matter of pride for the ladies of this place. Twice a week (Sundays and Thursdays) they surmount all kinds of obstacles of family life and come to join the kirtan. During this time an *asan* (seat) is also prepared for Ma in the *Nama Ghar*. A nice and pure feeling prevails. For these two days there is no worldly gossip amongst them and everyone comes with the sole aim of singing kirtan. Women of all ages, old, young and little girls, join in singing kirtan

¹³ If She were only fierce we would not be able to survive and if She were only soft there also would be no progress

¹⁴ the celebrations for Janmotsav, Ma's "birthday" celebrations

¹⁵ 17 May 1938.

together. Today as I watched the ladies I was quite moved and so I have written about it. At 11 p.m. the gents and ladies gradually retired to their homes. The Ashram has made arrangements for repetition of the "Name" by at least one person so Nama kirtan continues without interruption. I remained sitting on the verandah of the temple for a long time.

16 May 1938 Monday

In keeping with the traditional ways of worship, *Yajna* and kirtan amongst other activities were carried out. There is nothing important worth mentioning. Today also the ladies did kirtan for 2 to 3 hours. Then there was *arati* and later Kanu chanted "Nama kirtan" with everyone and did it very well. I liked it very much. Around 11 p.m. everyone gradually returned to their homes.

17 May 1938 Tuesday

Today is Ma's *Tithi Puja*¹⁶. It will be performed late in the night during the lunar date of Krishna Chaturthi¹⁷. After the regular worship the door to the cave (underground chamber) of the Kali Mata Shrine was opened. As per Ma, Shree Yogesh Chandra Bandyopadhyay came and opened the door. We were not at the temple then. After opening the door he sent for us. When we got to the temple Kuladadada said, "Terrible news! Look at Mother Kali!" Right then and there with the help of a light, I saw the *murti* (statue/idol) of Kali. Her lower left hand had completely fallen off."What is to be done now?" was the thought in everyone's mind. We decided that a telegram should be sent to Ma and in the meantime we would call someone to get the hand repaired. Once the hand of Ma Kali was repaired the door could be opened to the public. Ma had once said that in case some appendages or parts of the statue get disfigured then it should be repaired (like once before when thieves had broken one of the hands and it was then repaired). But in the case of a vital part, such as a human organ upon whose loss a human being would not survive, being disfigured or destroyed, then immediately the door to the cave should be permanently closed with a brick wall.

There was a lot of discussion on what should be done in the light of the circumstances. Finally it was decided to get the repair done as had been the case before. It was not certain exactly when the hand had fallen off. The hand could not be fixed in its original shape as it had fallen off from the shoulder joint so there was some question about it being repaired at all. All the same at midday, one Acharya was called and the hand was repaired and fixed. I heard from some devotees that once before when the wrist of the hand was fixed something special had happened with respect to the repair. After that Bholanath did the worship himself. That is why even after the hand was

¹⁶ *Puja* performed on the lunar date of Ma's "birth"

¹⁷ 19th lunar date the fourth phase of the waning moon in the dark fortnight after the full moon day.

repaired, Kuladadada did not dare to do the worship. He decided to worship the yantra¹⁸ instead. Ma had been informed by telegram about all this. At 5 p.m. in the evening the door was opened to the public.

By sunset the public was stopped from entering the cave. Mother Kali's puja was done to the yantra. Many stayed in the Ashram to see the worship. People have a chance to see Mother Kali after a year and so they kept waiting. At 3:30 a.m., the moment of Ma's advent, the worship of Mother Kali began. The gents began singing *Jai Ma, Jai Ma, Jai Ma, Jai*, after *arati* was performed. While sitting on the verandah many ladies viewed the worship of Mother Kali. It has been one year since the door was opened allowing everyone to see the Mother's idol to his or her heart's content. At dawn the worship and *arati* were finished.

18 May 1938 Wednesday

It is now the sixteenth day of continuous singing of the "Name" and it is supposed to end today. All arrived to join in the ritual and began singing away moving in a circle. They circumambulated the temple and Ma's hut while singing the "Name". Then incense was lit and they did the ritual of *lool*¹⁹. So many days of singing the "Name" had brought about a passion in the devotees' hearts. Gradually everyone left after having prasad.

Until today everyone had had a routine: they would come to the Ashram, and upon arriving they would be adorned with garlands and sandal paste. The seat for Nama Kirtan was prepared in Ma's hut and one by one they would occupy the seat and sing the Name "Ma, Ma." This used to be a day and night ritual. Sometimes some devotees would come and sing the *Padavalis*²⁰ in the room. The ladies came every day in the evening and sing kirtan. Shree Nagendra Nath Roy's daughter, Parimal, takes the lead nowadays. She does very soulful kirtan. Hirandidi and her daughter Belun. Kirandidi and many others sing very nicely and most of the ladies have learned to play the small and large cymbals. Maroni, the daughters of Kuladadada and Amulyadada, Mukta and many others play the cymbals quite nicely. The ladies garland themselves and apply sandal paste and sing the Nama. The ladies meet at the ashram on Sundays for kirtan. The last time I was here I told them that Shree Shree Ma was born on a Thursday and if they could get together on Thursdays as well and sing kirtan, it would be nice. The enjoyment of kirtan is so great that the very mention of this idea was readily agreed upon by all. This has prompted them to meet on Thursdays specifically for this purpose. Coming twice a week for kirtan was creating some discord in the families for many ladies.

¹⁸ A Tantrik design symbolizing a deity, carved on metal or crystal or painted on paper.

¹⁹ Hari-loot, meaning indiscriminate throwing of prasad in the name of Hari (God).

²⁰ Narrative and lyric devotional songs composed by Vaishnava poets.

but they could not be bothered. They tolerated the taunts and ridicule of people and simply would not stop coming. Day by day more and more came. Ma had said that if one does kirtan moving round and clapping in absolute abandon, the *granthis*²¹ get dissolved and the mind opens up new vistas; this is being realized by most of them day by day. Some get so immersed and enjoy it in such gay abandon that the bliss radiating from their being is clearly perceptible. Many a time I stand aside and feel enthralled by the sight of them. Seeing the effects of Ma's Grace, a thrill-like current runs through my whole body. Bhudevababu (lawyer) says quite often, "That ladies can get together and sing kirtan with such passion was beyond my imagination, it is possible only due to Ma's wish." I hear many sisters saying that even in the midst of all the work and family responsibilities, they feel an intense yearning for coming to the Ashram. No obstacles are great enough to stop them from coming. They also say that if their husband or children fall sick, the first thing that comes to their mind is that it will stop them from going to the Ashram. Yesterday Bhudevababu's wife was saying, "From early morning on we are eager to be finished with family duties and come to the Ashram on time, otherwise the mind gets very agitated." Actually I keep noticing that in scorching sun or continuous rain, these people come here every day to see us. It is needless to say not because of us, but because of their great respect and love for Ma that they come running with such earnestness.

Shree Barada Charan Sen's wife is quite elderly and cannot see properly but she comes daily to the Ashram to sing. Seeing this great yearning in everyone I am reminded of Shree Krishna and the Gopis. Some of the ladies have mentioned that their in-laws are afraid of seeing any other lady entering their house because they fear that the lady would take their daughter-in-law to the Ashram. In actuality, however, the ladies do not go to another's house for worldly gossip, they go to bring the other lady to the Ashram. Even when at the Ashram they do not indulge in gossip or useless conversation as is sometimes prevalent among women. They decorate Ma's photograph beautifully and get together for kirtan. Today I am overwhelmed with joy and so have written this about the ladies of Dhaka. I firmly believe that all this is happening due to the special blessings of Ma.

19 May 1938 Thursday

Yesterday we received the reply to the telegram and Ma has written, "The *murti* of Kali in its present form may be given its permanent *Samadhi*; it is no longer necessary to continue the worship of the *murti*." Today as per Ma's orders, the door was permanently sealed with a brick wall. The worship to this Kali has stopped in the thirteenth year. It started in 1926 and now in 1938, following the very last puja, the door has been sealed. Everyone was visibly saddened by this.

²¹ Knots of attachment and impressions (*sanskaras*) of past karma

20 May 1938 Friday

Ladies are coming everyday for kirtan as if the celebrations were still going on. We received Bhupatidada's letter in which he wrote, "Before receiving your telegram, Ma was telling us about the incidents surrounding the Kali *murti* many times. After receiving the telegram She laughed, saying, 'I have told you about all this already. Anyway now the Kali idol can be given its eternal *Samadhi*. I had also told Khukuni about this earlier.'"

21 May 1938 Saturday

In offering homage to Bholanath's soul, the Sadhu Bhandara was arranged and kirtan was performed from dawn to dusk. At dusk while the ladies were singing their kirtan, Bhupatidada's letter came. He wrote that Ma again has had fever since yesterday. For the last few days Ma had been talking a lot and appeared quite normal; now She has this fever and is nauseous. The fever goes up to 101/102 degrees. She has had fever since 15 May. This news caused us extreme worry. For with a weak body, getting unwell so frequently only She knows what She would do. Everyone was quite saddened.

22 May 1938 Sunday

There are many ladies here for today's kirtan which is being sung with a lot of enthusiasm. Day by day the ladies are enjoying singing more and more and some fortunate ones even feel the presence of Ma. This enthusiasm does not seem to ebb and many are coming on a daily basis. Bhupatibabu has written another special message to Kuladadada saying that in place of Pitaji (Bholanathji) Swami Akhandanandaji would be giving *diksha*²² as per Ma's instructions. Swamiji always thought he was not qualified to give *diksha*, so was not keen on doing it, but because it is now Ma's command, he has agreed. There were only a few applicants for *diksha*.

23 May 1938 Monday

There is no news about Ma and we are all worried about Her. Bhupatibabu has written, "On Saturday there will be a *bhandara* in Haridwar and on Sunday at Dehradun. After that what Ma does we do not know." Hence everyone was keen to know what Ma would do after that, but there is no news as of now.

²² initiation by the Guru wherein one is given a mantra.

24 May 1938 Tuesday

In a letter from Ramtaranbabu sent from Calcutta we found out that last Wednesday Shachibabu went to meet Ma in Dehradun. He is supposed to come back on Monday. He took leave for five days. He added that last Saturday a *bhandara* was organized in Birla Temple in the memory of Bholanathji. Even today there is no news about Ma.

25 May 1938 Wednesday

We received a letter written by Shachidada. After reaching Calcutta from Dehradun on Monday, he wrote, "I went to meet Ma for two days and during these two days I had a lot of joy which I still carry within me. Ma had fever but She is all right now." Today Swamiji gave *diksha* to one or two people.

26 May 1938 Thursday

In one letter Bhupatidada said, "A memorial is to be built for Bholanathji in the Dhaka Ashram. After many pleas, Ma has finally indicated the exact place where it is to be. Today in Yogeshdada's letter we came to know that Ma is fine other than a slight ache in the hands. The *bhandara* was completed properly on Saturday. Very soon Ma might go for a change of place. No more news today."

We have been in a terrible storm since yesterday although the number of ladies coming to the Ashram remains unabated. Today they have come and done kirtan. Khuki (Nagendada's daughter) does not seem to have any issues about coming to the Ashram and she enjoys singing immensely. Khuki, Belun (Prafullababu's daughter) and Belun's mother can sing quite well so they play the harmonium while they sing Nama kirtan one after another with others joining in. Ma's photograph is beautifully decorated with flowers by the ladies, then afterwards they settle down to sing. Kanu Brahmachari got the men together and has started kirtan on Saturdays. Every Saturday there is unceasing singing of the "Name" for twenty-four hours. Kuladadada finishes his worship, *Yajna* etc. in the temple from early in the morning and leaves for his office by 11 a.m. Nowadays he takes only fruits and *charu*²³. Kanu does the Shiva Puja and is continuing with his studies; Atul Brahmachari starts his work early in the morning, cooks the *bhog*, does the worship of Pada Peetha²⁴, and then Shiva worship in Siddheshwari Temple. So the activities of the Ashram continue. Kalachanddada and his aged mother came to the Ashram six months ago. He looks after his elderly mother, cleans Ma's hut and looks after the accounts of the Ashram as brahmacharis are prohibited

²³ Rice cooked in milk and honey over the fire of the *havan kunda* (fire sacrifice pit).

²⁴ Sacred footstool holding Ma's footwear.

from touching money. Householder devotees return from the office and after a wash sit near Ma's hut or some recess of the temple and do japa and meditation. Most of them return home after sandhya kirtan²⁵ and *arati*. After everyone leaves, an atmosphere of profound stillness prevails. The place is highly charged with spiritual vibrations and then there is this vast quietude of the fields.

27 May 1938 Friday

There is incessant storm and rain. It seems there will be a deluge. In spite of this a few people have come to meet us. No news from Ma.

28 May 1938 Saturday

It is *Amavasya* (new moon) today. In keeping with the traditions of the past Kuladadada did Ma's worship in the stillness of the late night. After sundown the storm and rain have diminished a little and a few people came to receive *prasad*. In spite of the weather, Shree Hemchandra Nag's wife and Dhirenbabu's mother came at night for offering worship; they watched the worship and did japa sitting on the verandah of the temple. At about half past twelve everyone took *prasad* and returned home. Manik wrote a letter on 10 Jyeshtha Tuesday²⁶. It was sent from Dehradun and just this evening we received it. He writes, "Most probably tomorrow, Wednesday, Ma will go to Mussourie. She is supposed to stay at the Arya Samaj Dharmashala. Birendada, Bhupatidada, Abhay, Dasu and Ruma Devi are accompanying Her and I might also go. Ma has sent Nishibabu and Mashima (Maternal Aunt) to Solan and Godavari has been sent to Sevashram in Haridwar." In another letter enclosed in Manik's letter, Shiv Shankar Kaviraj writes "Didi, Nidhu and I are leaving for Dhaka today; we might get delayed en route for 2-3 days." There is no more news.

29 May 1938 Sunday

We hoped that Shivshankar Kaviraj would come today but he has not yet arrived. We had planned to go to Calcutta tomorrow, but upon deciding to meet Karivaj Mahashay and hearing about Ma's well being, we have postponed our trip.

30 May 1938 Monday

This morning Amulyadada and Charubabu (lawyer) arrived. We talked a lot about Ma. After that many of our sisters arrived. Hirandidi came at noon. Her heart is quite agitated. She does not like worldly life any more. Her desire to be with Ma is overwhelming her. She has put a lot of

²⁵ evening kirtan

²⁶ 24 May.

restrictions in her diet and daily life. The reason for this austerity is her attraction to Ma. She says, "You see, Didi, if I am not able to be with Ma once in a while, I cannot continue with family life. After this I will just have to leave, setting aside all restrictions of family life." She is very simple at heart. By afternoon the wives of Jatinbabu, Manomohan Neogi Mahashay, Bhupatidada, Nagendada, Barada Sen Mahashay, Amulyadada, Akhilbabu, Hembabu, Kuladadada and Dhirenbabu's mother and many more sisters with their daughters arrived. They come daily. On getting me to join them they seem to be overjoyed. They listen to stories of Ma and perform kirtan. In the morning we assembled in the *Nama Ghar*²⁷. Many brothers have also arrived. They were seated with Swami Akhandanandaji. Bhupatidada's wife is quite unwell. But this did not stop her from coming. I kept telling stories about Ma to everyone.

Amulyadada's wife said something that moved me and I cannot keep from writing it here. She said, "When you love someone dearly there are times when you get annoyed with the person and say many harsh words. That is why when I went to the puja room today I scolded Ma a lot. I said, 'Ma, if You do not want to be present then why do You create such a yearning in the heart? If it is You who have given the yearning then reveal Your presence.' Really Didi, the yearning to see Ma is so strong that I become forgetful even about my husband and daughters. There only remains a strong yearning to see Her and there is a lot of anxiety about this." Listening to her words I was enchanted. Truth and simplicity radiate from her. Many ask, "What has Ma done? We do not understand much." I wish I could tell them all these things. Such deep feelings are aroused in the hearts of many. Of course, more in some and less in others. I listen to these heartfelt expressions from many sisters. Many of them try to lead a pure life in their houses and many have succeeded in their efforts.

Shivshankarbabu has not arrived so our plan to leave tomorrow was postponed. Until we hear the details about Ma from him we cannot leave.

31 May 1938 Tuesday

Shivshankar Kaviraj arrived this morning via Manikganj. We heard all the news about Ma. From Manik's letter we have learned that Ma has gone to Mussourie and that Her hand is aching a lot. The day after tomorrow, to commemorate Ma's departure from Dhaka, the ladies will offer "*Aluni bhog*"²⁸ to Ma. Every year this tradition is followed. Babydidi is the main organizer of the event. At their request we have decided to leave for Calcutta on Friday.

²⁷ Room reserved for singing Nama

²⁸ *bhog* prepared without salt. *aluni* -- saltless.

1 June 1938 Wednesday

Nothing noteworthy happened today.

2 June 1938 Thursday

This morning some ladies arrived after finishing their bath. The (*Aluni*) *Bhog* is offered by Kayasthas and Vaidyas (both sub-castes of the Hindus). Since they are not allowed to cook food offerings for Ma, on this day they cook *luchi*²⁹ and *aluni* curry³⁰ with their own hands and offer it to Ma. Because they cannot always cook for Ma, or for some other reason, one can see a lot of enthusiasm in their work. They feel overjoyed today. Together they cooked the *bhog* and at around 1 p.m. they offered it in front of Ma's photograph in Her hut. I myself offered the *bhog* to Ma. They all sat down to partake of *prasad*. *Prasad* was distributed also at night. Around 100 to 150 people partook of the *prasad*. In the afternoon the ladies sang kirtan.

All were expressing their sorrow as we were to leave the next day. Sitting at Ma's Lotus Feet everyone had a sisterly bond and attraction towards one another. This attraction would sometimes manifest more than what is seen among siblings. That is why Ma says, "Spiritual relationship is stronger than the relation by birth." All this can be seen now; the way these sisters have faced all odds and are looking after us and caring selflessly for our well-being may not be seen with kith and kin by birth. Only the spiritual relationship can be so beautiful. Since Ma is the origin of such a relationship, everything is so beautiful. They stayed back till late night in the Ashram because of us. Even the youngest girls kept sitting and narrated their tales of agony. While leaving for home Kuladadada's youngest daughter said, "Khukunididi, do not forget us - we hope you come back soon." I am amazed and enthralled as I realize that it is only Ma's Grace that is manifesting in all these incidents.

She showers Her blessings in so many ways. We cannot see or understand it as we are blind. Tomorrow is Shashthi³¹ Puja, so many are not able to come and see us off, and so, expressed their sorrow.

3 June 1938 Friday

This morning Hirandidi arrived. Last night she did not sleep well. Leaving aside all other work she came to the Ashram early in the morning. Some time later Nagendada arrived with his daughter. Ganeshbabu's wife somehow managed to offer her puja and came to the Ashram.

²⁹ Small handmade bread fried in ghee (purified butter)

³⁰ Saltless vegetable preparation. Salt is added after the dish is cooked and removed from the fire.

³¹ Shashthi- The Goddess who blesses women with children and grants longevity to children.

Manomohanbabu's wife is not well, but in spite of that, she managed to come to the Ashram in the scorching sun, panting all the way. Gradually Amulyadada, Shivshankar Kaviraj and others also arrived. Many more people also came. Jatinbabu's wife and some others who could not come expressed their sorrow in letters. Kanu, Jatu, Makhan (son of Chintaharanbabu) and some other boys accompanied us to the station to see us off. Hirandidi left before we could leave for the station. On reaching the station I saw Atulbabu (Bhramar's father) and Charubabu (Bhramar's uncle) had come to see us off and along with them Hirandidi came with her daughter Belun to see us off. I can perceive that on not having Ma close to them their anxiety has increased. They did not want to let go of me also. Who can tell how Ma's blessings will work? Sunitididi (Babydidi's brother's wife) accompanied us to Narayanganj. This time I have noticed that in spite of family duties, many ladies in Dhaka have a great yearning for spiritual development. Many of them are secretly pursuing activities to achieve this end.

Manomohan Neogi Mahashay's wife had broken down when she lost one of her daughters. During this time Ma visited Dhaka once. She was brought to the presence of Ma with a lot of effort. After meeting Ma she developed great inner strength. Up until then she had been bedridden but after meeting Ma, She started to go to the Ashram and met Ma daily. Before Ma left for Dhaka, she said "Ma, you are leaving, how shall I survive now? Again my daughter's grief will put me down. I was quite fine for these days." Ma took her aside and passing Her hand over her chest said "No, it will not happen again; you start praying to God." After this there has been a great change in her. She has virtually stopped looking after the family. She keeps herself busy with worship, japa etc. most of the time. She joins all sessions of kirtan in the Ashram and whenever we go to Dhaka, she visits us daily. She has only one prayer: "May I have devotion for God." She has been in the company of Ma since Ma was in Bajitpur. We have heard from Ma that she was an accomplished housewife. But now she does not relish family life any more. She says, "Does one have to work for the family forever?" It is heartening to see that due to Ma's blessings many have deepened spiritually in their hearts. Before we were leaving we received Manik's letter in which he wrote, "By today or tomorrow Ma will go back to Raipur and stay there. She has told me to return to Lucknow"

4 June 1938 Saturday

We are in Calcutta and came to Birla Temple in Shachidada's car. En route we stopped at his place and heard a little about Ma. At dusk we heard that Shachidada received a letter from Bhupatidada stating that Ma has been in Raipur since last Tuesday.

5 June 1938 Sunday

There is nothing noteworthy today.

6 June 1938 Monday

Today also there is nothing noteworthy.

7 June 1938 Tuesday

From Raipur, Birendada has written, "Ma is still in Raipur. Ma's body is getting weaker and weaker, but She has a smiling face and Her sweet countenance has not changed." He further writes, "But looking at Ma a feeling of fear arises and this feeling just cannot be ignored."

9 June 1938 Thursday

For the last two days there has been nothing new. This morning Bhupatidada arrived from Raipur; we heard from him that Ma's body is recouping and that She may stay in Raipur for some time. Further She has said, "Khukuni has been hurt and has been grieving since I sent her away; tell her she should not grieve. This is done for their own good."³² The sweetness of these words from Ma provoked tears of joy mixed with sorrow in my eyes.

Whatever Ma does is for our good. There is no doubt about it; but the mind refuses to admit it and gets hurt, aggrieved and agitated. Then on reflection and with reason, it calms down.

Today also Bhupatidada came in the morning and narrated a few stories about Ma. While talking he said, "Birendada and I have pleaded with Ma saying, 'You must improve Your health.' One day while laughing about this issue She said, 'You desire that this body gets well, but some also desire that this body gets crippled with illnesses and even finished-off completely. This body makes room for all those desires too. Their strong feeling of enmity sometimes gets stronger than your desires. This body is theirs too'."

11 June 1938 Saturday

A devotee of Ma came with his wife and took me to someone's house to hear Ram Kamal Bhattacharya's kirtan. *Mana Bhajan*³³ was being sung. One of the topics in the kirtan appealed to me and touched my heart. It matches with what Ma says so I feel like writing about it. The singer

³² Ma refers to all such occasions when She used to send particular companions away from Her temporarily.

³³ *Mana* in Sanskrit means pride, prestige, honour as well as measurement; in Bengali, it has a very special connotation – it stands for hurt sentiment, hurt pride, feeling cross, etc. *Bhajan* means breaking, getting over, solving, etc. *Mana Bhajan* is an episode of Krishna Leela in which Krishna tries to placate Radha, who has been cross with Him.

says. "The Sakhis (girl friends) of Radhika say to her, 'You are a princess and a Kumari (maiden) by age'." He further explains the word "Kumari", "Kumaris are of three types: one type who is not married, a second type who has not reached puberty even after marriage and a third type is the one in whose mind the worldly desires natural to adulthood have never crept in. One in whom 'ku' or evil has died is a Kumari. Radha many times is considered a Kumari of the third type." Ma also tells devotees pointing to Herself, "This daughter of yours is a Kumari, do not all of you know?" Again, I am told that after Bholanath's death She said, "I was a Kumari before and am so now. Even though you see that this body was married actually I have remained a Kumari. A maiden also uses vermilion and conch shell bangles³⁴ and that is why you all here made me wear these, so I am wearing them."

12 June 1938 Sunday

I received a letter from Birendada from Raipur. He has said, "Ma now has a smiling face. She takes milk in the morning, at lunch She takes milk, *chapatis*³⁵ and some vegetable dishes and in the afternoon sometimes She has fruit. At night She takes boiled vegetables without salt and a little bit of milk. Sometimes She tells us the stories of the past. I just listen --- the days of questioning are over for me. I just listen to Ma and what She is saying."

Shree Naresh Chandra Chakrabarty left yesterday to be with Ma. He will stay there for sometime before he returns. Today Shishir has left for Tarapeeth without any luggage or change of clothes for himself. He is overwhelmed by feelings from within. The boy could be naughty outwardly but within he has a nice feeling. He can sit still for long periods. He was not sure when he would return.

13 June 1938 Monday

There is nothing noteworthy today.

18 June 1938 Saturday

I learned from Birendada's letter that Ma is in Dehradun after a 10 to 12 day stay at Raipur. At Ma's word Manmathababu has left his household and started living in the Dehradun Ashram. A gland of Ma's right hand had swollen and now for two days there has been an ache in Her right leg.

³⁴ Vermilion mark on the forehead is not forbidden to maidens. What distinguishes a married woman is vermilion put in the parting of the hair. People wear conch shell rings etc. to propitiate the moon.

³⁵ Flat, handmade bread

21 June 1938 Tuesday

For the last few days I have had no news about Ma. We are waiting in Calcutta for the work on the books. Surendra Nath Mukherjee Mahashaya's wife has arrived from Dhaka and will leave from here to be with Ma.

Today I was recollecting about Babydidi; her life story is worth mentioning. Probably it has been written before, that she tries her best to follow Ma's orders. In Dhaka, as per Ma's orders, she used to go to the Ashram regularly and do japa etc. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the ladies' Sunday kirtan was mainly due to her efforts. She used to take many ladies in her own car to the Ashram and make them do kirtan. I have witnessed her great interest in religious matters. A few days after Jyotishdada's demise, Babydidi was preparing to go to Dehradun to be with Ma but then she received a telegram from Dhaka saying that Nalinibabu (Babydi's husband) had suddenly died. Babydi's trip to Dehradun was cancelled and she stayed back in Calcutta. A few days after the incident, her elder son Sukumarbabu (he had qualified in ICS and was appointed as a Judge in Madhya Pradesh) finished all the rituals of *Shraddha* for his late father and reached his place together with his mother. He had great respect for her.

But inscrutable is the will of God. After bathing at the Kumbh we reached Dehradun. The next day we left with Ma to visit Mussourie and there in the newspapers we read that on the first Vaishakh³⁶ Sukumarbabu's car had overturned in an accident, resulting in his death. Reading this news we became quite concerned for Babydidi. Within six months she had lost her husband and son and who knows what terrible state she must be in. But within a few days a letter from her reached Ma. In the beginning she had written, "Ma, you have taken away Khoka (the son) also. So be it, but let me know where shall I stay and what should I do?" We thought that perhaps due to extreme grief she was in a confused state of mind. But then another letter arrived, free of any anxiety, and with calmness asking for Ma's advice. Ma too dictated the reply to me as to whatever She had to say. Later we heard that after her son's death she had become so calm and composed that everyone was surprised. Some thought because of such a tragedy that she was in shock, unable to feel the loss. Some also thought that she had become spiritually more evolved. This time on reaching Calcutta I called on Babydidi. The moment she saw me she laughed, then came running and hugged me. I was surprised. After that she took me to a room, sat down with me and told me many stories. She recounted her son's demise, but surprisingly I could not see any tears. She said, "On the first day when the body was brought in I cried a lot, but after that I did not feel like crying. Some say that I have lost my mind, some say that I am spiritually evolved, but I know due to Ma's blessings I am in

³⁶ around the middle of April.

this state. See Didi, even if grief fills my heart it seems to dissolve. I understand well enough that it is Ma who has put me through such great sorrow but also She is holding me steady. The grief cannot do anything to me. Actually I am in great peace." On seeing the condition of the mother whose ideal son has gone so tragically I have no doubt that she has received the Grace of Ma. I was happy seeing Babydidi in such a calm and composed state. The next day Babydidi attended the kirtan at Shree Yatish Chandra Guha Mahashaya's place; we also went. On receiving Ma's blessings, it seems that the beauty of her countenance has enhanced -- she seems to be exuding pure *bhava*. When she was sitting still for kirtan it was a sight to behold for many. She wanted to go and meet Ma, but Ma had forbidden her. Once she left us here she went on to Puri. Now through Bhupatidada Ma has given Her permission. May Ma's blessings be showered on everyone in the same way; this is our earnest prayer.

There is no doubt that Babydidi is blessed by receiving Ma's Grace. It is worth narrating about one who has received Ma's Grace and that is why I have written so much about all this. I have always witnessed that she performs her daily religious duties with full dedication. Perhaps that spirit of dedication in her has brought her to this state.

25 June 1938 Saturday

Swami Shankarananda is very ill and has been sent to Kashi along with Yogeshdada as he had expressed a desire to go to Kashi. From Kashi Yogeshdada came to Calcutta to meet us. We talked with him about Ma for 3 or 4 hours. He left for his home town (Khulna) to visit his mother. He is scheduled to stay there for a few days and return to Dehradun via Calcutta. We heard from him that when Ma left for Dehradun from Raipur, She told Kamalakanta and Ruma Devi to stay in Raipur. She had said, "My movements are not certain -- I could possibly return to this place. In case I move elsewhere I shall take you all along." When Kamalakanta complained about staying without Ma She said, "All right, let us all go." Saying so She came to Dehradun with everyone. After this incident She told Yogeshdada, "Kamalakanta has not followed instructions and this will in turn have a terrible consequence, which would be beyond him (Kamalakanta) to tolerate; hence this body (pointing to Herself) will bear the consequences." Such expressions of Ma's have possibly been mentioned before. It is not only Kamalakanta, but we are all guilty of such acts and the benevolent Ma takes everything on Herself. How can we expect Ma to remain healthy in body? Ma always said, "Your *bhavas* have kept this body healthy and again due to your *bhavas* all this happens. If you all want to keep this body it will stay, otherwise it will perish: I have no will or otherwise regarding this issue."

27 June 1938 Monday

Today Narendada (Chowdhury) has come to meet us; he has come to Calcutta for work. I heard from him that 4 or 5 days back he had received a letter from Sadhan and was informed that Ma was going to Raipur.

I heard another incident worth mentioning from him and am writing it down. He says, "Before the Kailas trip Shree Dilip Kumar Roy had sung for Ma in this temple and after that he said, 'Ma, when can I sing for you next?' Ma replied, 'Whenever you think of this daughter and sing, I shall be listening to that.' Those words of Ma struck a chord in my mind. I desired to learn singing and thought that then only Ma would be close to me. I tried the same for a few days. But is it possible to learn in old age? I gave up the effort. I was returning with Hariram in his car after seeing Ma off on Her way to Kailas and singing *Ma, Ma*. All of a sudden I recalled that Ma had told Shree Dilip Kumar Roy that if he sings remembering Ma She would listen to it, sitting near his lap. I thought then if I also remember Ma and sing, then Ma would come and listen to my song. On the arising of this thought it seemed to me that Ma had come and was sitting next to me. In the meantime I actually saw a small baby like the idol of Shree Krishna, sitting on my lap, putting his arms round my neck and listening to my singing. My eyes were open and I could see clearly and then fell into a trance. The image remained there for sometime while the singing continued and then vanished as the singing ended." After narrating this he said, "I have not told this to anyone and am only revealing it today." It has been written before that this couple, after seeing Ma, left their household and spent a lot of time with Ma. As we continued conversing, he narrated the incidents of the period when the couple had accompanied our group to Almorah while we were on our way to Kailas: "See Didi, we were in such a state then that without Ma we could not survive, but then where do we leave our children? Finally we looked at the photograph of Ma that is in the house and said, 'You are here, look after the children. We are coming to You.' Saying this we set out and found Ma." Narendada was narrating all this with a lot of emotion and it stirred my heart, hence I am writing these stories.

28 June 1938 Tuesday

Today through Hirandidi's letter from Dhaka we came to know that she also heard Ma has gone to Raipur. We have not yet received any letter to this effect. Shree Surendra Nath Mukhopadhyay's wife has come here from Dhaka en route to meet Ma and after staying here for a few days she has left to be with Ma.

8 July 1938 Friday

We continue to hear that Ma is in Raipur. Birendada and Nareshdada have returned after having been in Ma's company. Nareshdada came the day before yesterday and told us that Ma's health is deteriorating day by day. The palpitations and pain in Her arm persist. Ma has hinted that these are a manifestation of some devotee's desire. Ma says, "Sometimes someone's intense feeling of animosity towards this body manifests itself more strongly than the *bhavas* of you all; the intensity of such a person's emotions is more than yours. It could also be that in the midst of intense feelings of hatred, he is thinking about this body every moment. Now, as per your talk of devotees, the greatest devotee is the one who thinks of this body in a continuous stream of intense *bhava*. This is why strong inimical wishes will show their effects in this body. Everything is bliss. Everything is a form of Him only. In your language you call it the *bhava* of hatred, but for me all *bhavas* are the same. All *bhavas* originate from Him and only He receives the manifestations. Also know this: whatsoever *bhava* it may be of whomsoever, nothing can harm this body." We become frightened listening to Ma speaking in this way because if She continues absorbing all such *bhavas* of all these types of people, then how will Her body remain intact? I do not know what Ma wishes. All devotees are feeling worried about Ma.

Last night Shachidada and Yatishdada arrived. There was a lot of conversation about Ma. Well into the conversation Shachidada said, "Look Didi, that Ma's *Kheyal* is invincible is the truth that I myself have experienced in my life." Then the discussion went on, "Maybe Ma talks to us in our normal human way because otherwise for us conversing and interacting with Her would not have been possible. But, when She says something that comes from within spontaneously it will turn into reality. Nothing different can happen." Further Shachidada added, "Another aspect of Ma is seen that there is no particular string sounding in Her (predominant tendency in Her), that is to say. She has no *sankalpa* or *vikalpa*³⁷ but again all things are in Her. Whoever strikes a chord of whatever *bhava* from wherever it may be, it resonates within Her and that is why even the animosity of an antagonist also resonates in Her. She accepts all with joyous equanimity, manifesting signs in Her own body." Being emotionally charged Shachidada was narrating all this while sitting on the verandah of the Shiva Temple and we were listening, enchanted. He continued, "Whenever we visit particular sadhus we find they have particular tunes resonating within and when someone joins them, playing the corresponding tunes, they too enjoy the tunes. But for Ma, She has all the tunes and chords and at the same time there seems to be nothing. Whatever tune you play, it

³⁷ *sankalpa*- resolve or wish for a particular outcome.

vikalpa- an alternative resolve or just an alternative. The pair, *sankalpa-vikalpa*, refers to an oscillating state of mind, haunted by selfish desires.

seems it is there in Her and She responds to it with joy. Is there any comparison? She can only be compared with Herself." The heartfelt feelings of a devotee on a moonlit night at the lonely Shiva Temple were just enthralling. The more one places oneself in Ma's company the more will one be able to realize the truth of these words.

Now Kirandidi, Kamalakanta, Ruma Devi and Abhay are with Ma. Nareshdada said he enjoyed his stay there a lot. The more one stays in the vicinity of Ma, the deeper the feeling of joy experienced by him.

15 July, 1938 Friday

No matter what news I get of Ma -- from Manmathababu's and Kamalakanta's letters -- I gather that the ache in Her hand persists and Her body is quite weak. She is still in Raipur. Most of the devotees say, "When Khukunididi is with Ma we feel quite happy and relieved of the anxiety about Ma's health." But I do not know why Ma has kept me so far off. This time also Nareshdada has gone and pleaded, "Ma, get Khukunididi to stay with you." Ma has replied, "Do I not know that when she is around this body is well looked after? It is for their own good they are being kept far away." Nobody has the power or logic to argue with Ma. In receiving so much expression of good will from everyone, I only feel it is all due to the special blessings of Ma. I pray to Ma that She gives me the strength to carry out Her orders. In spite of the agony of being away from Her, may I never disobey Her orders. She always says that She is present also in the form of Her orders. We pray that may we be able to realize it.

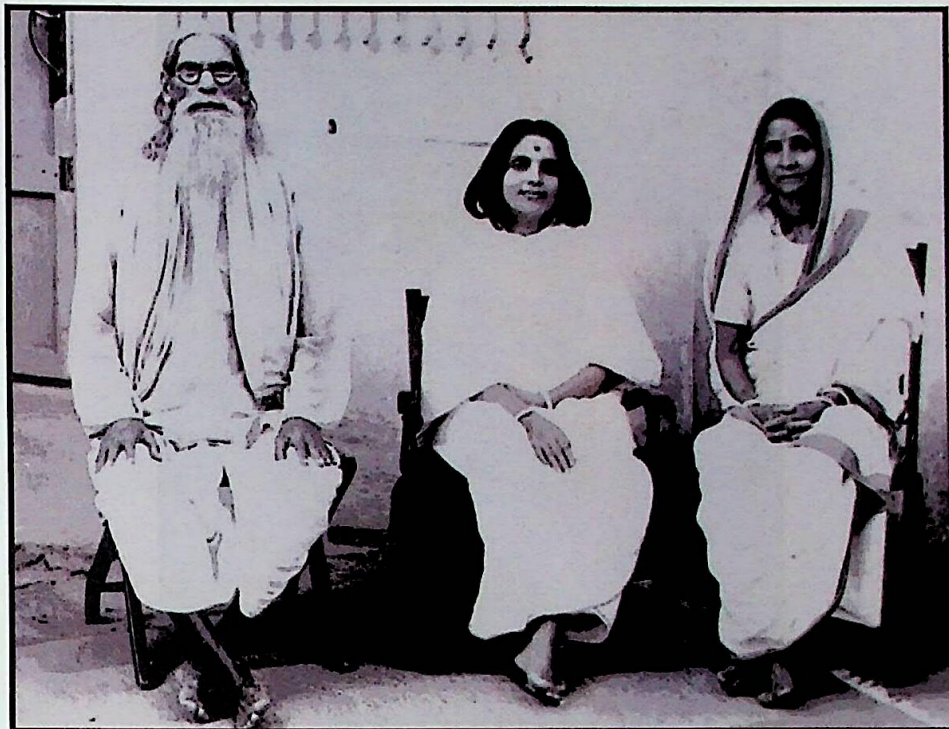
17 July 1938 Sunday

I received a letter from Kamalakanta who is at Raipur. I learned that Ma had gone to Dehradun. She was at the Ashram for three to four days. With the *sankalpa* (resolve) made by Birendada and Narsinghbhai for Ma's recovery, a *Yajna* was performed by Shree Manmathababu which was then followed by kirtan. Ma then returned to Raipur. Abhay, Ruma Devi, Sadhan, Kamalakanta and a disciple of Nigamananda Swami are with Ma. We received a letter from Abhay a few days back in which he wrote, "Ma's body is still unwell and now Ma says, 'If you all do Nama, my body will recover from sickness.' That is why it occurred to me that we should all do one lakh japa each for Ma's health. Shree Manmathababu said, 'The name "Ma" is the best and every day we should do some japa and complete the desired number of repetitions in a certain number of days.' When I informed Ma about this She said, 'Since it has occurred in your mind, write to everyone and whoever feels like it can do it.'" On receiving this news from Abhay we have all decided to do a lakh japa each. All the devotees are being informed everywhere. When the mind

becomes pure with japa, to Ma Herself we are to pray. "Ma, please get rid of Your illness and become healthy, this is the earnest desire of all the devotees."

21 July 1938 Thursday

At midday today Kirandidi came to meet me. She came to Calcutta two days ago. She last met Ma at Kishenpur Ashram and on the same day Ma had decided to go to Raipur. Kirandidi was present during the *Yajna* etc. We learned that Ma is slightly better now.



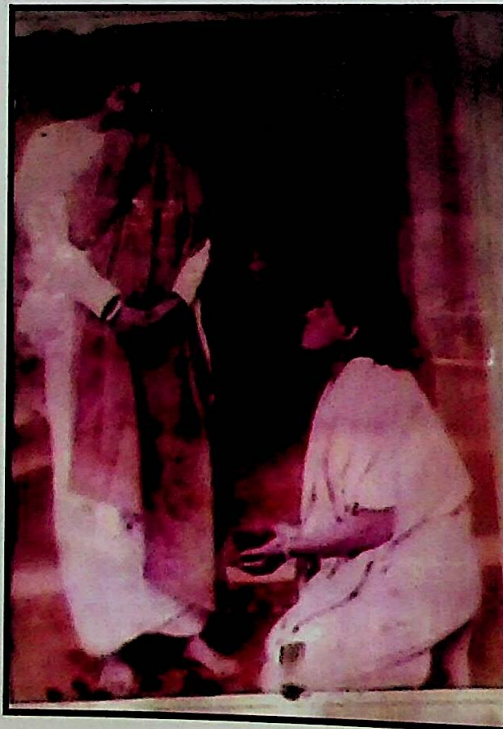
Shree Shree Ma with Her Mother and Father



Shree Shree Ma and Baba Bholanath



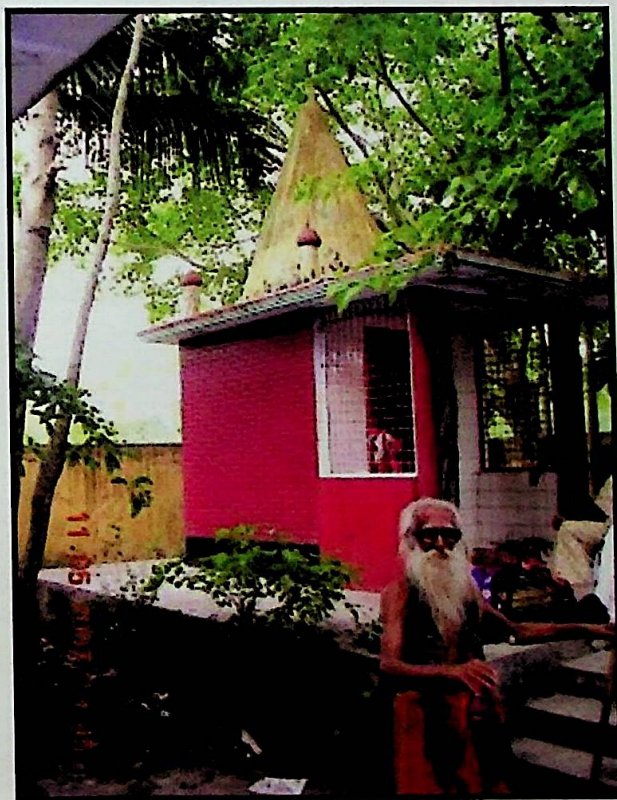
Shree Shree Ma, Baba Bholanath and Bhaiji



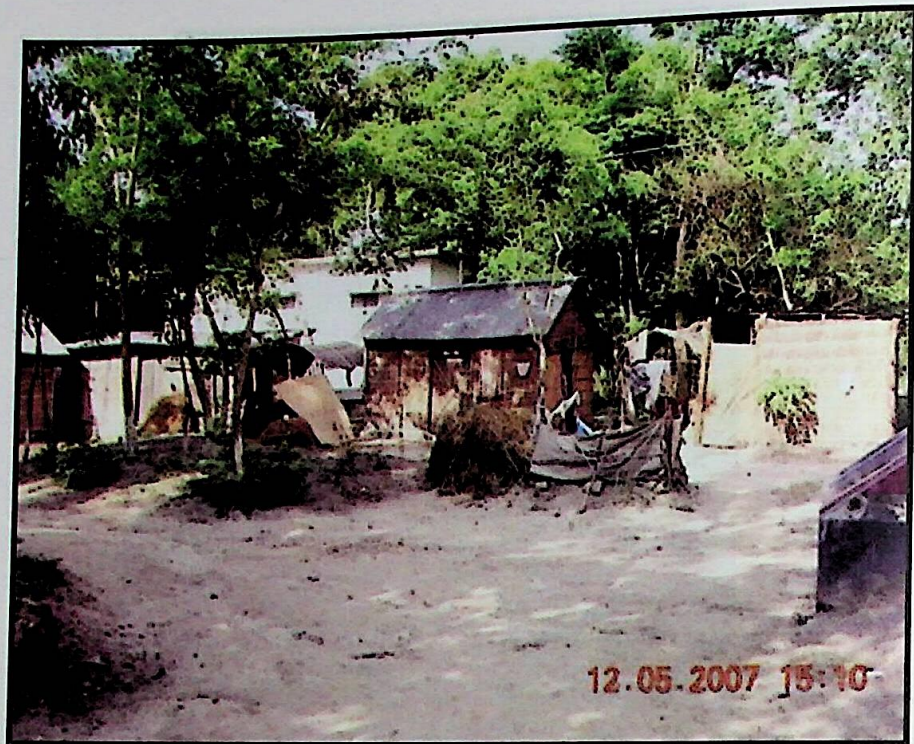
"Matri Kripa Hi Kevalam"
Gurupriya Didi at the Lotus Feet of Shree Shree Ma



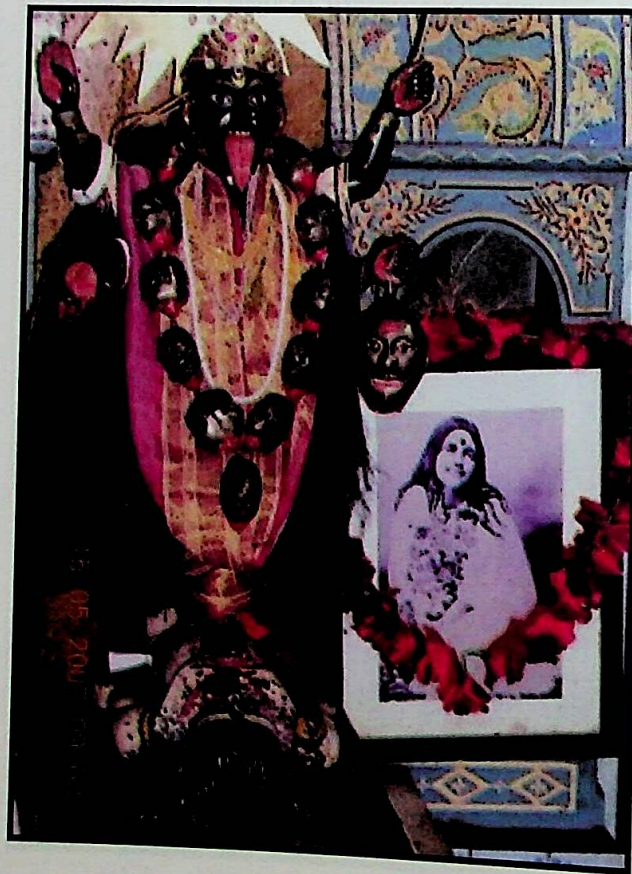
"Tvameva sarvam mama Devadeva"



Shree Shree Ma's Holy Birthplace, Kheora



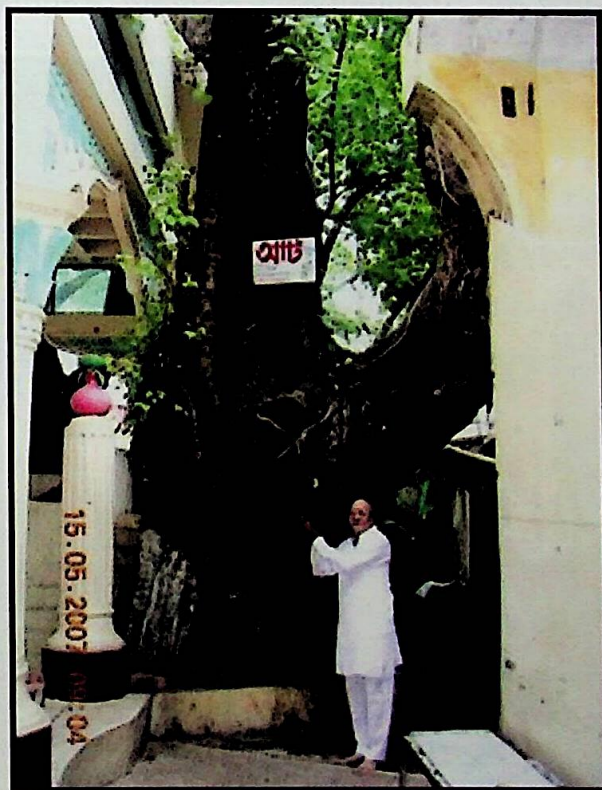
Shree Shree Ma's Parental House, Vidyakut



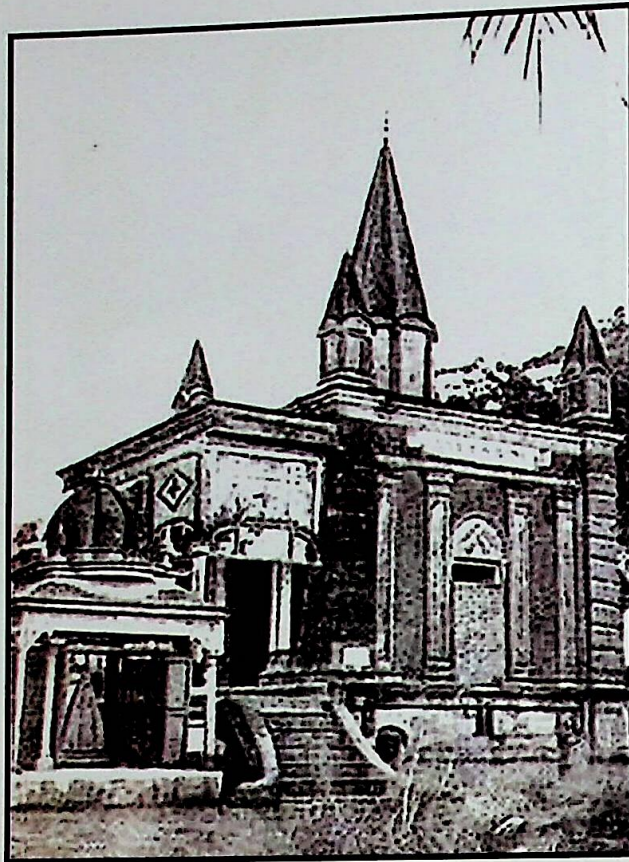
Shree Shree Ma Kali, Siddheshwari, Dhaka



Shivalingam, Siddheshwari Ashram, Dhaka



The Holy Tree (Peepul), Siddheshwari



Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Ashram, Ramna, Dhaka



Golghar, Shahbagh, Dhaka

CHAPTER - II

(27 July - 17 August)

27 July 1938 Wednesday

A few days back we received Abhay's letter saying that Ma had gone to Solan. Today I received a telegram from Panchudada from Shimla. He writes that Ma is at Shimla and that She has ordered us to leave tonight itself for Shimla. We are leaving tonight.

29 July 1938 Friday

Today, after a two and a half hour delay with the train, we reached the Lotus Feet of Ma at three o'clock this afternoon. When I did *pranam* to Ma She said, "Since you all were due to arrive today I have not lain down; I have been up since one o'clock." With such sweet words from Ma all agony and sorrow vanished. Many devotees of Ma, our brothers and sisters, were also waiting for us. They expressed their joy once we arrived. I learned that the devotees had told Ma, "Ma, please call Didi, we really do not feel good without her being around." As soon as Ma gave Her consent, they sent the telegram. Once I was there Ma commented, "You all were anxious for Didi to be here, so now I have got your Didi here." She had a lot of fun talking like this for some time. The pressure in the heart seemed to have lessened. I noticed that Ma's health is the same. To commemorate Ma's arrival at Shimla the devotees have arranged a *Nama Yajna*³⁸, which will begin tomorrow. It has been eight days since Ma's arrival at Shimla. Ma had stayed in Solan only for three days. At dusk we performed the *adhivasa*³⁹ and then everyone sat down with Ma. A lady asked, "Ma, the mind does not focus, what to do?" Ma laughed and replied, "I do not see your mind being distracted." Then She added, "Does your mind become restless for Him? If it is restless for Him, then it will have rest." At 10 p.m. I convinced others that with Ma's poor health She should not stay up late, so gradually the devotees left.

³⁸ During a *nama-yajna*, *nama* is offered as oblation to the fire of God-remembrance. This term was connoted by Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who pioneered to give an opportunity of performing this kind of *yajna* to those (women and non-brahmins) who are not entitled to the right of performing the vedic fire sacrifice. This idea is also in keeping with the teachings of the Gita, in which it is said that there are various forms of *yajna*.

³⁹ Literally, invocation of the Deity. The *Nama-Yajna* is dedicated to the Tarak Brahma mantra (the mantra that gives salvation)- "Hare Rama Hare Rama" etc., sung by the followers of Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and by Bengalis in general in the reverse order, beginning with "Hare Krishna." There is an anecdote about the reversal. When Mahaprabhu recommended this mantra to be recited in a loud voice, many objected saying that mantras are not to be vocalised. Then Mahaprabhu solved this problem by reversing the order so that the prohibition could be lifted. During *adhivasa*, the presence of Gour (Chaitanya Mahaprabhu), Nitai (Nityananda), and their associates is invoked.

30 July 1938 Saturday

Today at 6:00 a.m. the *Nama Yajna* started. Ma was adorned with garlands and sandal paste and we also wore garlands and applied sandal paste and sang:

"Shree Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Nityananda

Hare Krishna Hare Rama Shree Radhe Govinda"

While listening to the kirtan, Ma was going into *bhava*, but She managed to control it. Nevertheless, the body was showing its own signs. Ma commented, "When these people (devotees of this place) do kirtan, they do it with devotion." Everyone left at 10:00 p.m.

31 July , 1938 Sunday

The ladies did kirtan along with Ma from 12 noon until around 4:30 p.m. and today also there was a perceptible change in Her *bhava*. When She began going round the stage along with the ladies, swaying Her hands, they seemed to be encouraged a hundredfold. In gay abandon the ladies danced and sang:

"Shree Krishna Chaitanya Prabhu Nityananda

Hare Krishna Hare Rama Shree Radhe Govinda."

Today also Ma controlled Herself to some extent from the onset of *bhava*. After the kirtan the ladies sat down with Ma. Then gradually they left one by one. As the ladies left the men came in and sat down with Ma. They were eager to know about Bholanath's demise, but due to conventional politeness they dared not ask. Last evening when I began discussing this, they listened, fully alert, and Ma too joined in the discussion with me. She was recounting everything with a smile. They commented, "We were keen to know about it but were feeling hesitant to ask Ma." Smiling, Ma replied, "Now when you hear me telling the story with a smile, are you thinking She was not supportive towards Bholanath?" Everyone replied together, "No, no Ma, we would not make such a mistake." There was an elderly lady sitting in a corner and looking at Her. Ma said smilingly, "Ma, do not some people have such thoughts?" With folded hands the lady replied, "Ma, I admit I was thinking, 'Is it possible to narrate such a sad incident with such an expression?' We are worldly people and cannot even imagine this *bhava* of Yours!" It was then that everyone saw that Ma understood the feelings of this lady and that is why She had spoken in this way.

Today while talking Ma suddenly said, "At some place some disturbance is taking place." Everyone understood that some mishap was going to occur somewhere. Then Devendrababu wanted to know all about Kailas from Ma. She asked me to tell the story, so I began and She joined in from time to time.

Kirtan and patha are organized in the Kalibari⁴⁰ every Sunday. Today after sunset, some started the Sunday programme - they brought Ma there and made Her sit down. The kirtan started after some time. Manojbabu requested, "Ma, please come and join our kirtan for a little while." Ma had been sitting on the verandah of the Kali Temple. At his request She joined the kirtan group and began going around, swaying Her hands slowly to the rhythm, boosting the enthusiasm of the singers. Yesterday, kirtan was done from dawn to dusk and today also the ladies did kirtan at noon. Ma has been in a different *bhava* the whole time. Although She has been controlling this state, yet a little observation shows She is in a different *bhava*. As such, She again joined the kirtan at the request of the devotees. The change in *bhava* again manifested a little. After some time Ma sat down and the kirtan continued. Her face was beaming with an unearthly beauty. The devotees kept looking at Ma's face with an enchanted gaze. The kirtan did not continue for too long; after this, Ma got up and sat on Her bed. The devotees then sat down surrounding Her. Ma was sitting quietly. Everyone was quiet and there was absolute silence and stillness in the room. After some time, breaking the silence, some devotees began to ask a few questions. Ma replied but Her speech had become so indistinct that Her replies were not understood clearly.

It was getting late in the night, there was incessant rain and everyone had to cross the mountainside to reach their homes, but no one seemed to be bothered about it. No one wants to leave Ma's company. Yesterday the ladies heard the story of Bholanath's last moments and since the men wanted to hear it as well, the conversation started on similar lines. Before we left, we had seen Bholanath addressing Ma like a child, calling out, "Ma, Ma" and now we found out that after we left, Bholanath's feelings had only intensified. He was always calling out like a child and Ma would respond at once and go to his room. From two days before his passing, She spent most of the time at his bedside. This continued until he breathed his last. Ma began to say, "See, as long as Bholanath did not have this feeling internally and externally, this body was not with him all the time. The moment the childlike feeling arose and he started calling 'Ma, Ma' in a simple childlike manner, this body would be present before him immediately after his call. At night, on the day before his death, he expressed a desire to eat cooked rice. Since it was night time he was not served then. The next day, early in the morning rice was cooked for him. When Yogesh went to feed him the mashed rice mixed with lentil soup, he asked, 'Has Ma eaten? I will not eat until I get the prasad after Ma has eaten.' Then when Yogesh put a little of the soup in my mouth, Bholanath earnestly pleaded, 'Will you feed me this prasad?' I said, 'My hands do not work properly, but yes, I will.' Saying so, I fed him and he ate everything with relish and was content. Then he said, 'Can I touch you?' This

⁴⁰ The Kali Temple at Shimla

feeling was also like that of a child, just as a child wants the touch of its mother. As I extended my arm he held it with both hands, then his hands began to shiver and fell away. Then he said, 'I want to see you.' Initially he could not see clearly but later on he did. He said, 'I have seen you.' I knew these feelings would manifest and before this I had told the Kaviraj (Ayurvedic doctor) to apply butter to his eyes and look after him with care. Once I asked him, 'Are you having a lot of pain?' he answered, 'Yes I am, but I cannot make out exactly where it is.' Though I do not do anything out of my will, with Bholanath lying on his side, my hands passed on him from head to toe twice or thrice. Prior to this, there was hardly any instance of touching him to soothe him in his state of illness; it was others who were attending to him. But now after these hands had done something of a *kriya* on him, I saw he was quite relaxed and relieved of pain. He was asked, 'Do you have any pain now?' and he happily said with a smile, 'Ananda.'

"He had once said, 'I am going.' I said, 'Is there any coming or going? One should not speak of such things.' Then he said, 'All along You have been giving me this aspiration.' Before dusk Gola had given me a garland, as she did every day. I took the garland to Bholanath's room and kept it there. I knew there would be need of a garland later on in the night and when that time came, it would not be available. Shanti had said that she was taken aback when she was about to touch the garland --- that it seemed to be alive. Bholanath's body was totally naked. At sunset he said, 'I am feeling cold'. I took out one of his new ochre clothes and covered him with it. Sometime before this when there was talk about his initiation into *sannyasa*, he once said to me, 'I have a feeling that you are a mother to me, but I cannot express it outwardly. When I get initiated into *sannyasa* then the first thing I will do is to call You "Ma" in front of everyone and take my alms from You.' I noticed that coincidentally those words of his came true the last time he took his food and clothes from these hands. At dusk I asked him, 'You like kirtan, do you want them to do some kirtan now?' He said 'All right.' I called Yogesh and asked him to do kirtan. It lasted for some time and then stopped. Then I asked him, 'Do you remember the mantra of your *sannyasa* initiation?' He said, 'Yes.' I saw that though Pranava and mantra were not uttered audibly, they were being uttered within, quite obviously. Though he heard the mantra of initiation into *sannyasa* on the banks of Manasarovar, he was told to do the rituals on the bathing day at the Khumbh. Accordingly he performed the rituals that day on his own. One can see that in the cases of both Jyotish and Bholanath their bodies did not last for long after initiation into *sannyasa*. Before he breathed his last my hand was on his Brahmatalu⁴¹ and it remained there. Even though I do not do anything out of my own will whatever is to happen continues happening. Even when Nirmalbabu breathed his last

⁴¹ The middle of the crown of the head

his crown was also touched but no one noticed it. After the last breath I asked the Kaviraj, 'Is it all over as per your diagnosis?' In a bewildered state he looked at my face and at Bholanath's and said, 'Yes, Ma'. Thus everything took place in utter quietude. The house was quiet and those present did not understand much. That is why I made all of you take your Didima away from Kishenpur, for had your Didima been present it would not have been possible to keep things calm." Everyone gradually left following this conversation.

1 August 1938 Monday

Since this morning everyone sat around with Ma. At about 11:00 a.m. I took Ma for Her lunch and She said, "Khukuni, today I have a *Kheyal* to leave Shimla. You all get ready. It is all right if we leave by 4:00 or 5:00 p.m." At that time only a few devotees were at Kalibari, the rest had gone to their respective offices. After lunch there was discussion about Ma's *Kheyal*. The few devotees present objected to the proposal adamantly. But eventually seeing Ma's sweet but firm disposition they understood nothing would change. They went to call everyone to let them know of Ma's *Kheyal*. It was raining incessantly. It was getting dark and meanwhile, having received the news by phone, everyone started coming in telling me, "Didi, we got you here thinking that you all would stay here with Ma for a while, but what has happened?" I said, "What to do, it would not be proper to go against Ma's *Kheyal*, so I do not say anything. Is it not right to let Ma follow Her own *Kheyal*? Many a time I have seen that Ma changes Her plans to satisfy some people, but the result is not good. Of course by Her *kripa*, She sometimes fulfils the desire of devotees but that is a different matter." On listening to this and Ma's words nobody dared to oppose Her any more. Once everyone got the news, they rushed over. They pleaded, "Ma, if You have to leave please do us a favour -- please do not leave before we can leave our offices. We will be there by 4:30 p.m." Ma said, "All of you will see me off at the right time." Nearly all the men had to leave. The ladies started coming in with food, flowers, garlands, sandal paste, etc. Everyone was desperately pleading with Ma not to leave so soon. Ma kept satisfying everyone by Her sweet words, but was firm about leaving. As soon as possible the men left their offices and started assembling in the Kalibari. With all preparations for the journey done, we set out at 5:00 p.m. Everyone came along to see Ma off. After the car left everyone stood there in sadness. Devotees were waiting at different points on the road, all lined up, stopping the car as it passed by, and worshipping Ma with garlands, sandal paste and so on. Thus dissipating the joys in Shimla Ma arrived at Solan with us after sunset. A while after our arrival, the Raja and the Rani came for Ma's *darshan*. The royal officials had made all the arrangements. We were accommodated in the quarters constructed by Shogi Baba. On Ma's orders, Nibaranbabu is staying here (he recently came here after leaving his household). The Raja has kept

this house, a beautiful bungalow nestled in the hills, especially for Ma.

2 August 1938 Tuesday

At Shimla early in the morning at six o'clock, Jitenbabu, Dhirenbabu, Pankajbabu and others would come to Ma and sing kirtan. Abhay used to sing the "Name" and they used to join in. This practice is continuing here also. Abhay starts the chanting of the "Name" early morning at 6:00 and we all join in. He sings very well and has an amazing childlike disposition so his singing seems even sweeter. He is prone to renunciation and intellectual analysis from within.

While talking, the topics of Ma's self *diksha* and the mantras and *stotras* emanating on their own from Her lips following Her *diksha*, were brought up. Ma smiled and said, "See Khukuni, as a child I would be alone playing in a room and muttering in a low voice all such things that would come out on their own, but whenever it was felt that someone was approaching it would stop instantly, thus everything remained secret. That is why I keep saying that whatever is required keeps happening on its own."

I also heard that in Raipur and Dehradun many times the mantras and *stotras* came forth spontaneously and that also once in Raipur for two days the *stotras* were emanating in musical tunes. In Raipur Ma once composed a song and started singing. The song goes:

Whom do I fear now?

(I) Am sailing in a boat;

Even if the storms roar,

Even if the boat sinks, let it sink.

His is the voyager and His is the boat;

I have put my trust in Him

Whom do I fear now?

Ma seems to be in a kind of *bhava* for the last few days. This afternoon while relaxing Abhay was turning, tossing and rolling in his bed. Immediately Ma said, "Can you roll around in the whole room?" Saying this, smiling, and in a distinct *bhava*, She said, "Shall I do it? Shall I do it?" and on saying this She just dropped down loosely on the floor and started rolling from one end of the room to the other gradually entering into a mysterious *bhava*. She had shut Her eyes and the body seemed completely limp. Abhay and I kept calling, "Ma, Ma!" but there was no reply. After a long time She came to a near-normal state but She seemed drowsy.

3 August 1938 Wednesday

After relaxing at midday, later on this afternoon the Raja, the Raja's Pujari⁴², and some others came over at about 3 p.m. The Pujari has translated a particular series of *slokas* that were spontaneously uttered from Ma's lips. He then read them to Ma⁴³. But as I had written before, Ma's trance-like state is constant and now She is even having difficulty keeping Her eyes open. Eventually the body became still which continued for about two hours. The Rani, the Raja's mother and others came. At dusk Ma got up and sat down. Her gaze was becoming more and more fixed. Eventually this *bhava* dissipated considerably. When we asked Her about it, She said, "From within, the body remains in one and the same *bhava* always, but outwardly the body plays with you all and looks like this sometimes." Saying this She started laughing like a child.

At about midnight Ma lay down. To relieve the pain in Her hands we had been massaging them with oil but today I noticed that the oil was not being absorbed. I said, "Ma, today the body seems a bit strange, the oil is not going into the body." Ma said, "See, what fun, the body is not absorbing the oil. Everyone cannot notice this. It happens sometimes that the body does not receive it, so it gives it back." I said, "Ma, if this happens how will the medicines be effective? That is why you keep saying, 'I have not given up anything'." Ma said, "I used to tell Bholanath, 'I have given this body to you all, do whatever you like', but they observed that this body would not always receive everything. This body used to react so violently if he changed his mind or thoughts, it would stun him to the point that he would run around frantically trying to find a remedy." She further added, "Sec. few will be able even to comprehend such things, but since you all make Me say so, perhaps this is why such revelations are coming out."

I forgot to write something down: on Tuesday night, that is last night, around midnight, Abhay, Mashima⁴⁴ and I were in Ma's room. Ma was sitting and suddenly She said, "Will you sing the name of Hari? I will do to the extent I can and then the three of you do it." We started singing the 'Name'. Ma was sitting there and swaying, the expressions of Her eyes and smile changed and while smiling She said, "Shall I play a bit with this body?" We said, "All right" and Ma said, "Turn off the lights." With the lights off, the room became dark and nothing could be seen. We carried on singing for a long time, then Ma lay down and told us to stop. What happened in between we do not know. Today there was again some of this rolling on the ground. When we asked Ma, She said, "I told you all that I would play a bit with this body. The play was done. Last night, too, there was a bit of this but you all could not notice." The Raja, Rani and both the mothers of the Raja (his own mother and a step-mother) came in the afternoon. In the evening Abhay sang kirtan. Everyone

⁴² The priest (Pujari) who is appointed by the Raja

⁴³ *Ehi bhavanayabhayam*

⁴⁴ maternal aunt.

retired by 11:00 p.m.

4 August 1938 Thursday

After early morning kirtan Ma continued to lie down for a long time. At about 7:30 a.m. She got up and sat down. Ma's lunch was served around 10:00 a.m. A Sikh named Sadhu Singh who has been visiting Ma for a while brought his *Granth Saheb*⁴⁵ and wanted to read this sacred text near Ma. He said, "Ma, I have noticed that whatever is written in our sacred text, I hear words of the same *bhava* from You. I would like to read from the *Granth Saheb* near You." Others had also come and Ma said, "Fine, since you feel like it do read. Everybody will enjoy listening." Never does Ma interfere with anyone's sincere *bhava*. Whoever comes to Ma with whatever *bhava* finds that Ma is fully present. This is why everyone who comes to Ma finds peace by being near Her.

It was around 11:00 a.m. that the doors were closed for some time so that Ma could rest. In the afternoon, Ma got up and began to stroll. A discussion began as to who is to be called a widow. Ma said, "*Vi + ya - ya + vi*"⁴⁶, that is (pointing to Herself) *Ya - viyoga*. First of all, there is union (Yog:) with parents, that is, birth. After that, '*ya+vi*', that is, *viyoga* - that is *viya*." Ma was laughing as She further said, "If there is yoga, union, only then is *viyoga* possible." Pointing to Herself She added, "For this one, since there is no yoga, then how could *viyoga* be possible? No *vi-ya* ever took place, so how can this one be a *vidhava*? Again I say, for the one who is ever united with *Dhava*, how can there be any *viyoga*?"⁴⁷ Saying this, She began to laugh.

At around 5:00 p.m. the Raja took Ma to his palace in his car. After Ma got there, She strolled around outside for some time. Then the Raja, the Rani, the two mothers, and the handmaids came and sat with Ma. They stay with Ma until 8 p.m. Abhay sings kirtan together with others as the Raja's mother is quite fond of this so as per her wish it is sung. She also joins in. They leave some time after 8 o'clock.

The reason why they leave after 8 is because *Jhulan* is being celebrated at the Palace⁴⁸. At 8:00 p.m. the idols of Radha and Krishna are placed on the decorated sacred swing. This ceremony is then followed by kirtan so that is why everyone leaves at that time. After they left, Swamiji,

⁴⁵ the central religious text of the Sikh religion

⁴⁶ Play on words: Ma is making a pun with the East Bengali word for marriage, *viya* (from the Sanskrit *vivaha*). 'Vi' in Bengali pronunciation in Sanskrit is a prefix, one of the meanings of which is "without" or "minus". Ma points to Herself by saying "*Ya*", meaning this one or this body. Thus Ma makes and gives meaning to the word *viya*, or "separation from this body." When a girl marries, she gets separated from her parents to be united with her husband and when the husband passes, she becomes a *vidhava* (widow, *vi*=without the *dhava*=husband). For the one who was never married, there is no widowhood. Secondly, the one who is always united with the *dhava* (Master or God) cannot be widowed. Lastly, the one Being who permeates all is above union and separation.

⁴⁷ Ma suggests that *dhava*, like its synonyms *nath* and *swami*, also stands for the Supreme Lord.

⁴⁸ *Jhulan* is a five day event that ends on the full moon day, or *Purnima*. Called the "Swing Festival", it is a celebration of the play between Radha and Krishna, swinging on a golden swing

Nishibabu, Yogeshdada and others came and sat around Ma. We conversed until 10:00 p.m. Those of us who sleep in Ma's room spread out our blankets. Ma said, "If you sleep in this room you will have to pay tax and the tax is chanting the 'Name'. So come, let us do kirtan and then we will sleep—what's the point of sleeping now?" And that is what happened: Ma gave the lead with singing *Haribol, Haribol* and we sang along. At around 11:30 p.m. we went to sleep. Devendrababu along with his wife and a relative came in from Cox's Bazaar. They had gone to Dehradun to meet Ma but when they found out where we were, they came here. Mention has already been made of Devendrababu's wife, who had lost many children and had been in a terribly agitated state until she met Ma and found peace at last.

5 August 1938 Friday

This coming Sunday, 22 Shravan (7 August), is the first anniversary of Jyotishdada's passing, so kirtan and *Yajna* have been organized at various places. Here also kirtan will be carried out from dawn to dusk. About 20-25 devotees are arriving from Shimla tomorrow for doing kirtan. The Raja is quite happy to make all these arrangements so they are being done as per his wish. Today at dawn, after the kirtan, Ma went out for a walk. Later on She returned and had a wash.

While Ma was pacing about in Her bedroom, I broached the subject about the words. *Purna Brahma Narayan*, which She had uttered in Bajitpur. Ma responded, "See, the first time the words '*Purna Brahma Narayan*' came forth, people began to discuss it in ways that reflected their particular line of thinking, most likely because this body is that of a woman. Later on, with queries and during discussions of various kinds, words like *Narayani, Mahadev and Mahadevi* also started coming forth."

I also raised the topic of what had happened at the Kali Puja in Bajitpur when a fair-complexioned (with a reddish glow) Brahmin entered the house from Ma's right side. Ma responded by saying, "You know what happened? From the right side he entered the room, but that is not the end of the story. Sometimes stories remain incomplete and the truth does not always come out completely. Some portions remain untold. Do you know what happened? From the right side of this body the Brahmin's figure emerged and was visible in the space.. I could see him clearly." Today I have learned this new fact. It was never told before.

Many such occurrences concerning Ma remain unknown and thus remain incomplete, probably because the time has not been ripe for their full revelation. Today again I was alone with Ma in the room. In these moments, the aforesaid facts get revealed. I said, "Ma, we hear only the word *Narayan* from the lips of the *sannyasis*. Since this word *Narayan* is not referring to any particular form of God is this why the words *Purna Brahma Narayan* came from Your lips? Ma

said, "See, the period during which such things happened, this body was a village bride and had no chance of hearing words like *Brahma*, etc., but still the words came out of these lips. They, who heard this had never heard such words and started discussing *Purna Brahma Narayan, Narayani, Mahadevi* --- what can we make of all this?" I said, "Ma, for You it is only like this in all matters. You were a bride in a village household, where women cover their faces with a veil way into their old age, and now you defy such protocols, is it not surprising? Had You not been shy from the beginning, one could have said 'She was shameless and this way of behaving was the norm for Her' - but that was not the case because protocol and shyness were much stronger in You than in anyone else. From that environment to this present state, in such a short span of time, is this an easy transition?"

Then Ma replied, "From whom could one hear such words? The people around who were there never discussed such matters. This body would just pull the veil over Her head and slog away in household chores."

The topic about the internment of the Kali idol was brought up. Ma said, "See, whatever had to happen rightly happened. If any part of this body is harmed it must be treated and that is why the repair was done. Even though the *murti* was still upright, by the next anniversary it could have been destroyed. Whatever happened has happened correctly. So, when puja was offered to the *Yantra*, it was also Her puja that they performed. If the reply to the telegram had been received that very day all this would not have happened. When all this⁴⁹ had already happened, what was to be done next was communicated in the telegram. Next year there will not be any puja. It is already a known fact that all events have to take place in the right way." Saying this She laughed.

After *bhog* (food) was offered, the doors to Ma's room were closed so that She could rest. Around 3:00 p.m., the devotees began to come again. As on other days, today the Raja and Rani, the Raja's mothers, the female attendants and many ladies came over and sat in Ma's room. Before sunset Abhay started singing and everyone joined in. Everyone left around 9:00 p.m. On Abhay's request Ma sang:

Who is it that knocked at the door of my heart today?

Whose sweet voice have I heard?

Listening to His words I can no longer remain at peace,

Restless has become my heart today, made me leave my home

Having drunk the wine of delusion, unconscious did I lie,

Who is it that has come today to wake me up?

⁴⁹ Puja offered to the *Yantra*

Ma sang the song sweetly in a *Bhatiyali*⁵⁰ tune. When Jyotishdada was asked to sing this song, he often sang it. The soulful singing in his voice was also very sweet. We went to sleep around 12 midnight.

6 August 1938 Saturday

Everyone from Shimla has arrived this evening. Kirtan will be held in the Raja's *darbar* hall. Biren and some other boys came and started preparing the stage. The stage was ready around 10 p.m. That is when Ma was taken there. Once She was there, the rituals of *adhivasa* were carried out and then kirtan began. At 2:00 a.m., everyone rested. Tomorrow kirtan will begin at 6 in the morning and continue till dusk. 7 August is the lunar date of Jyotishdada's passing away and the kirtan is to mark this occasion. This ceremonial kirtan will take place also in other locations such as Dehradun, Dhaka and Jamshedpur. In Dehradun there will be *homa*⁵¹ and *Bhandara*⁵². On the kirtan hall stage Jyotishdada's photograph has been placed below the photographs of Ma and Radha Krishna.

7 August 1938 Sunday

The Nama Kirtan of "Shree Krishna Chaitanya" began at 6 a.m. and a fair number of people gathered around for this. Wearing garlands and decked with sandal paste the Raja and his subjects all were singing the kirtan together. As is done during the *Nama Yajna* in Shimla, a place was reserved for the *bhog* ceremony in one room of the temple. Five seats were set aside for Nimai, Nitai, Advaita Acharya, Shreenivas and Gadadhar⁵³ and food offerings were made. A Brahmin Vaishnava performed the puja and other rituals. After this, during *arati*, all sang the special kirtan meant for the *bhog* offering while circumambulating the puja area. Ma was brought there and just as for the five above-mentioned, Ma too was offered *bhog* in the traditional ritualistic style. Ma was on Her seat and *arati* was done to Ma and the other five. Looking at their expressions it seemed as if God were actually present. With kirtan in full swing, Ma was taken there as well. Ma was later on brought to the Dharmashala built by Shogibaba. She was seated for the *bhog* offering. Again, Ma's expression was changing although She was managing it. At about 4:30 p.m., She was brought to the kirtan hall. Around 6 p.m., a procession out of the hall began with Ma in the front. Only a short distance away is the temple and dharmashala where Ma is staying. The procession with Ma arrived

⁵⁰ *Bhatiyali* is a boat song, sung by the Bengali boatmen whilst going downstream on the river

⁵¹ ⁴⁸ *Yajna*, fire ceremony

⁵² Public feast

⁵³ Nimai is Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Nitai is Shree Nityananda; the other three were contemporary Vaishnava followers of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu

at the temple and kirtan was sung outside in the courtyard for a while. Then gradually everyone took Ma back to the kirtan hall where the concluding songs for the kirtan were sung:

My Gaur has come home; my Nitai has come home.

Mother Shachi ran forward and picked up Gaur in her arms

And covered his lotus-face with kisses...."

Then they sang:

"Jaya Radhe Radhe Govinda jaya

Jaya Radhe Radhe Govinda jaya."

Biren started this Nama kirtan at dusk and now it has reached a crescendo. Ma's *bhava* began changing. When She stood up all those participating kept Ma in the centre and went around the stage singing the kirtan. It seemed that the kirtan was flowing out of Ma's being. After this Ma dropped to the ground and began rolling. She just fell on to the stage from Her standing position. I tried to hold Her from behind and in doing so I also nearly fell down. Though for a little while, the singers sensed the change in Her *bhava* and began singing kirtan with heightened enthusiasm. It seemed the hill kingdom was resonating with the vibrations of Nama Kirtan. At noon while on the way to the Dharmashala, Ma had said, "The sound of the Nama Kirtan can be heard here also and it seems that along with it there is an illumination and warmth coming this way." And really that is what is happening. The Raja had been moving around with the singers throughout the day and along with him the *wazir* (Minister), his son, the officials and many other people joined in. There is a huge wave of some unique spirit sweeping across the entire kingdom. There seemed to be no difference between the Raja and his subjects, he was even dressed like a commoner; singing kirtan all day long had even changed his looks. As it is, the Raja is already a religious person and the Nama Kirtan has reinforced this. Moreover, his being in the presence of Ma seems to have brought on such an intoxicating state. The Raja and others had never before seen Ma in this *bhava*. That is why all were quite overwhelmed with joy and amazement. Ma kept lying and later on got up and sat down. Her gaze was fixed; Her eyes became red and filled with tears. Looking at those blissful eyes everyone stood with folded hands. It was well past dusk. Ma was helped to stand and then taken to the car to be brought back to the dharmashala. The Raja and other devotees sat around Ma, but many devotees could not sit for long as they had to return to Shimla at 8:00 p.m. The Raja had arranged for motor transport to and fro for all the devotees. When we called out to Ma, She sat up in a sort of trance. Everyone paid their obeisance and left. Ma also spoke a few words indistinctly. This phenomenon seems to be something new to us as before if She got into a *bhava* She would not get up so soon, but today it surprised me that She could get up in such a short time. I am reminded that a long time ago, when we were discussing Her states of *bhava* during kirtan She would say, "See, which way

this body will behave cannot be predicted. Then again it is not that just because one stage has been crossed over that it is not possible to go back to it again. This body can play at all times and in all circumstances." Seeing Her condition today it seems to me that previously Her body played for some time at the stage of absorption in *bhava*, so that kind of play used to take place to its full extent. It was difficult to bring Her back to "normalcy" because the body was responding to that particular state. Now it seems She had come down from a different level for some time and so Her body could come to "normalcy" in such a short duration; Ma appears to have also admitted this much by Her expressions.

Whatever I could guess I have written down. Making conjectures about the limit of an apparently limitless ocean would be madness for a person like me. After everyone left I made Ma lie down again. There was no sound or movement for the whole night.

8 August, 1938 Monday

Today Ma got up early and went out for a short walk. Abhay went with Her. After walking for some time at random Ma returned to the dharmashala and was given food. After that She lay down for a little while. At around 3 o'clock She sent me to the temple in connection with some work for the *Yajna* and puja.

While I was there I heard She had the *Kheyal* to leave for Dehradun today. We had not yet had lunch. In view of the kind of state Ma was in yesterday, nobody thought She would begin the journey today. But right from the beginning I have noticed that when Ma has a *Kheyal* for something no obstacle can get in the way. Whenever She decides something She is never concerned with ease or unease and when we complain She says, "Why worry? Things will be managed somehow." It used to be that we still would not stop worrying, even after being assured as we were. But now gradually I have come to understand that with every *Kheyal* of Ma's, something happens out of nowhere and everything gets resolved.

The news reached the Raja and whoever else heard the news came running. The new devotees are surprised at the turn of events, but the Raja, though sad, was not surprised. He has seen these movements of Ma's many times before. A group of ladies from nearby places arrived. Ma was telling them, "Do the Nama kirtan. You should not be sitting idle with an empty mind and lips closed." One lady asked, "Ma, there is so much household work, how can we do the 'Name'?" Ma laughed and clapping Her hands She said this rhyme as follows:

"Man mein Hari Ka nam	-----	With the Lord's name in mind,
Hath mein duniya ka kam	-----	and worldly work in hand,
Issci milega Paramatma Ram"	-----	You will meet Ram, the Supreme

One.

I laughed and said, "Oh, I see! Now You have started making rhymes and saying poetry every now and then!" Ma started laughing like a child.

Yesterday at noon, when Ma was attending the kirtan, the devotees were frightened to see Ma's body as weak as it was. On Akhandanandaji's insistence Panchudada and Manojdada took Ma back to Her room supporting Her on the way. Upon reaching the dharmashala they said, "Ma, Your body is weak and during the kirtan Your body was in such a state that it caused us to be very worried. We are afraid that until Your body gets cured we should not do the 'Name'." Ma said, "You should not say that you will not do the 'Name'. In reality, you are curing this body by doing the 'Name'. The japa you do is like a dose of medicine and the kirtan you do is like an injection. The injection hurts a little initially but the results show later. It is like that." Saying so much, She started laughing.

Because Ma was leaving, the Raja requested that She be taken to the Palace. After staying there for an hour we came back. The Raja photographed Ma. At 8 p.m. we started for Kalka in the two cars provided by the Raja. The drive is about 26-27 miles through the hills and would take about 2 hours. This time Ma asked Abhay to stay at Solan. She said, "A *Kheyal* has arisen that he stay at Solan." She added that whenever Abhay wishes he can come along. When and what orders one gets cannot be predicted. Sometimes we see She showers a lot of love on someone, keeping the person close to Her. Ma was showing so much affection to Abhay for his simple nature and beautiful bent of mind. He is a young lad of 16 or 17 with such spirit of renunciation; everyone thought Ma would keep him with Her from now on. But no one can predict what Ma will do in the next instant. Abhay came with us to Kalka. Many felt sick en route and some even vomited. On a hilly route people sometimes become car sick in this way. We reached Kalka around 10 p.m. Nibaranbabu also came along up to Kalka. He has recently joined the Ashram and Ma has kept him in Solan for puja, prayers and other rituals. He stays in the dharmashala built for Ma. He had been an accountant and now earns a pension. Our train left at 11 p.m. Abhay and Nibaranbabu returned to Solan in the car provided by the Raja. Akhandanandaji, Rumadevi and I accompanied Ma. Devendrababu and his family, from Cox's Bazaar, also travelled with Ma. Mashima and Nishibabu also stayed on at Solan.

9 August 1938 Tuesday

Around 7 this morning we arrived in Dehradun. On receiving the news of our arrival from the Raja of Solan, Hariram Joshi, Kashibabu's wife, Lakshmi Rani, Sarada and many more people were waiting at the station to receive Ma. Everyone came to Kishenpur Ashram along with Ma.

Shree Manmathababu, Yogeshdada and Kamalakanta are at the Ashram. Everyone is happy on Ma's arrival. At about 1 p.m. Ma was given food. After lunch the doors to Ma's room were closed so that She could have some rest. Many people came in the afternoon for Ma's *darshan*. Kirtan was done in the evening in the hall. Sadhan Brahmachari suddenly arrived from Raipur and discovered that Ma is in the Ashram. At around 11 everyone retired for the day.

11 August 1938 Thursday

Early this morning there was kirtan and Ma got up around 8 a.m. and sat down. We keep getting letters addressed to Ma regularly every day which are read out to Her at convenient hours. If Ma has a *Kheyal*, She dictates a few words to be added when we reply to the letters. Surprisingly those few words suffice in consideration of the lengthy letters that are received. Everyone wants the replies to have a few lines from Ma, but the problem is if there is no *Kheyal*, we do not get a word from Her. Again, when there is a *Kheyal*, immediately on listening to the letters She dictates something or the other answering ten to fifteen letters at one time. As I said before, those few words or lines beautifully suffice for the reply to the entire letters. A few days ago one important person, Shree Mahesh Chandra Bhattacharya, sent a letter from Vindhyachal. The gist of the letter is: "Ma, which of the two places, Vindhyachal or Kashi, is better to be in at the time of death? I shall be grateful if I can know Your personal opinion. Personally I like Vindhyachal but the Pandits say there is no place better than Kashi." He had not written to Ma before so this was his first letter. He does not visit Ma often, but somehow meets Ma from time to time. Whatever She has instructed him to do, he has followed with great zeal and devotion. Through his own efforts he has risen from dire poverty to become a "*lakhpati*" (a wealthy man). Even though his association with Ma appears to be casual and outwardly he seems to be a worldly man, Ma says, "He has some substance to him." In consideration that he has not met with Ma that often, his letter clearly shows that he possesses tremendous inner faith in Her. I sat down to write the reply, and because Ma does not write letters to anyone, if there is something important She dictates a few lines or words when She is asked to. When I asked about this query Ma said, "Write, 'Baba, it is not the same for everybody. Do you want to know the Truth? Kashi is within you. For you Kashi or Vindhyachal is the same. Keeping this in mind wherever you can peacefully meditate on that 'One', stay at that place. One who is rich in the knowledge of oneself, *svadhan*,⁵⁴ is actually rich, and you are rich in that sense (though you do not yet know about your inner wealth) for presently this fact has not been revealed to you. That

⁵⁴ *Svadhan* means literally "one's own wealth". Together with *sadhan* (spiritual endeavour), this word formed one of Ma's favorite puns. Ma used to say that *sadhan* leads to the discovery of one's *svadhan* (one's true inner wealth).

is why for you it is said that Kashi and Vindhyachal are the same for you. One cannot rely on even a single breath, for it may be the last. Should we not strive, Baba, so that with every inhalation and exhalation the memory of 'that One' is alive?" What is within someone can only be told by the Omniscient One. Not very often do these details come forth so clearly, for it must be admitted that everything is a result of one's own karma.

On arriving here this time I heard that one lawyer, Shiv Prasad Singh, on seeing Ma when visiting here, has developed a great devotion for Ma. He writes everyday and goes to great lengths to know about Ma, including sending telegrams.

After Ma was given food the doors of Her room were closed at midday so that She could get some rest. The doors reopened at 4 this afternoon. Hariram and a Punjabi gentleman who heard about Ma in Punjab, came to Dehradun to meet Her and upon not finding Her he went to Solan and met Ma there. Again he travelled with Ma to Dehradun and now has rented a house here. Some other ladies and men from the vicinity have also come.

Ma was seated on the verandah. Sitting in the room for 'Name' Yogeshdada started with "Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma, Ma" and immediately Kamalakanta, Manmathababu, Sadhan and others joined in. This continued for about an hour. After that visitors were being introduced to Ma.

The topic of Bholanath's demise came up and we heard that after his death Ma had said, "Prepare the garlands, sandal paste and whatever else that is required." Again She said, "Go to Ramakrishna Mission and find out in such an event what needs to be done." Ma's *bhava* did not change a bit. Ma laughed and said, "Great, it is only the state of the body that underwent a change, what was the need for any change of *bhava* on this issue? From your point of view, it is like a thing has been shifted from one room to another. Does the soul have a routine of going and coming?" We heard that after Bholanath's body was taken for the rituals, Lakshmi Rani had said, "Ma, have a wash." After having given Her a wash, she gave Her a glass of water which Ma had and later lying down she started talking in a normal way. Ma also joined in this discussion. On the issue of changing Her attire Ma kept smiling and said, "Look, according to worldly customs after this kind of thing happens, neighbours or relatives come and change the attire of the widow who has a feeling of, 'for whom shall I dress up or make-up from now on?' She herself discards her present attire and in keeping with the custom someone else changes her dress. In this case nobody came for this purpose nor was there any feeling from within so things remained as they were."

I said, "Ma if You had had any indifference towards Bholanath at any time then people could say that that was the reason for such behaviour, but You never gave any one such an opportunity. To find one so dedicated to her husband as You had been is extremely rare in the world, and with this history of Your previous *bhava*, Your *bhava* at that moment surprised people. Even if the deceased

were one's enemy, how difficult would it be to keep oneself calm in such circumstances is known to all in this world. So many plays of Yours You have shown us, Ma." After saying this I kept quiet. Ma laughed and said, "Why? Is this such a special event? This is a very normal thing to happen. Why are you all considering it to be a terrible thing?" I did not say anything in reply. On having seen Ma's behaviour with Bholanath, perhaps many may not fathom this *bhava* of Ma. Not only in this case, but in others too Ma may be fondly treating some one with love for some time and then in the next moment, seen from the worldly point of view, She hurts the same person so much that one cannot imagine it. It does not take but a moment for Ma to make or break. With such a smile She does this play of "make or break" that it leaves all stunned. Again in this world it is so difficult to comprehend this kind of *bhava*. Ma can only be compared to Herself.

At night Ma was lying down and I was sitting next to Her. Among other things Ma said, "Look, do you know how this body (pointing at Herself) behaves? Just as when people want to teach little boys and girls, they take their book and spell A,B,C etc., like the children whom they want to teach. When one teaches them to write A,B,C etc., he takes his pencil and slate and writes as a child does; does not the teacher know how to read or write? Still one does as is required, similarly this body does everything as is required. Another angle is, be it for anyone or for a *sadhak* of any sect (here there is nothing like 'this or that' sect) this body keeps doing the required work or help to facilitate that one's spiritual progress. Helpful action that is rendering service to them, what else? By their grace they get the work done by this body." It was late in the night, Ma and I went to bed.

12 August 1938 Friday

Today also Yogeshdada sang with others early in the morning. Ma got up around 8 and sat down. I gave a bath to Her today at 10:30 a.m. Last evening Ma said, "Khukuni, did I not tell you something? It seems I was telling you about a telegram with bad news that has been received." I said, "Now where is this bad news coming from?" Ma did not reply. Today also, among other things Ma said, "Look, all that is spoken has elements of the past, future and present and you all do not perceive it, thus you all think it is all about the future or the present." After food was offered to Ma at about 11 a.m., letters delivered in the mail were read out to Her and some got a brief reply as She listened. She did not listen to all of them. At 12 noon the doors of Her room were closed so that She could rest. Most of the time, leave alone speaking, She cannot even hear others speaking to Her. That is why at the opportune time a few letters are read out in quick succession.

Before Ma could get up at 4 p.m. a telegram was received from Pt. Mankeshwar Raina, the father of Gola from Firozabad. It read that Gola was suffering from some kind of hysteria. And just

yesterday Ma had spoken about a disheartening telegram.

This afternoon when Ma sat down to have a refreshment She told me, "You know what I was seeing? I saw that one person was dying an unnatural death and at the same time this body (showing Herself) went there and had a *Kheyal* that the unnatural death would not be allowed. At the rise of this *Kheyal*, immediately the person lost his feeling regarding the unnatural death and had a feeling of happiness." I said, "Ma, that means though outwardly that person had an unnatural death yet the sin due to his resolve for suicide got negated and his journey to a higher plane after death was secured." Ma said, "Exactly, but it is not that every time such things can happen." I said, "Ma, that is why it is said that what we see outwardly may not be in fact the true picture." Ma said, "This only depends on the inner state of the person concerned."

At night Ma was strolling outside when the topic of Bholanath came up. I asked something and Ma replied, "Look, the way Bholanath's vital breath (*prana*) left him, nobody could make out. It could have been that I was sitting somewhere else and in the meantime the vital breath left his body. For outwardly nobody thought that his life breath was going to leave him. I was telling them to do kirtan and arrange for other things and they thought I was doing it without purpose. Everyone believed that Bholanath was relatively better that day. While he was talking, he breathed his last. Further usually before death the legs straighten out and other things happen, but nothing of that sort happened. He was lying on his side with his knees folded and just before his death he lay on his back, easily and comfortably. Then the life breath left. He had once asked to be seated and if he had been seated his *prana* would have left in the sitting position."

She went on to say, "See, whatsoever has to happen will happen. Bholanath was not with me many a time, but during his death he was with me. Santosh was with me during his death, Nirmalbabu came to me from nowhere before his death. Jyotish also stayed in many places but during his death he was with me. Whatever has to happen, happens naturally." At 10 p.m. Ma lay down.

13 August 1938 Saturday

Like other days in the afternoon Ma got up and sat down. Babydidi and Tunu's mother (late Atul Dutta's widow) arrived today from Calcutta to meet Ma. From Raipur, Bishu Brahmachari, Shachi and a few other people have come to meet Ma. Shree Swami Nigamananda's disciple Brahmachari Shashanka has been under Ma's care for the last few months and She has kept him in Raipur. He also came two days ago to meet Ma and has been sitting in Ma's morning and evening gatherings. Shachi Brahmachari is observing *maun*. Looking at him Ma said, "What have you gained by observing *maun*? While keeping *maun* you have to remember God in your mind,

otherwise the tree will not bear flowers and fruits. We want all of the flowers and fruits. If you just plant the seed in the earth, you will not get a proper tree. You have to nurture it." Saying this She laughed.

Saraswati Devi from Arya Samaj came along with a few ladies. She has the role of an *Acharya* (Preceptor). Babydidi and others were sitting with Ma on the verandah towards the east. Babydidi was meeting Ma for the first time after losing her husband and son. There are tears in her eyes but still she is calm. Ma was narrating to others about Babydidi's misfortune and said, "The incident has left her as a yogini so that she can merge with Him through Yoga. The heart is His seat and He is surely established in His seat and to realize this, one has to do *sadhan-bhajan*. He is Eternal, and hence if in His seat we seat someone who is perishable and involved in coming and going then what remains of the status of this seat? Transitory things come and go, hence there will be the pain of losing them. If we seat someone else in the seat of the One to whom it belongs, one has to suffer the pain." The evening passed discussing various topics like this. Ma asked Saraswati Devi to sing a song. She sang in her language. Since it was getting dark everyone left Ma reluctantly. Again at night following the kirtan Devendrababu's group from Cox's Bazaar sat with Ma and discussed many things. At 10 p.m. Ma went to bed.

14 August 1938 Sunday

This morning as Ma got up and sat down, Yogeshdada went to Her with a few letters. Ma replied to the necessary ones in a few words. Not all the time are replies given though. Among others, the topic *bhog* (enjoyment) and *tyag* (renunciation) came up. I said, "Ma, no one can even accept *bhog* the way You can. In Dhaka when You were dressed up in a Benarasi sari adorned with jewellery, You remained like that for many days. There were four or five necklaces tangled up around Your neck which gave You cuts and bleeding, but You were not aware of the pain and kept on wearing the necklaces." Ma started laughing. When the topic about the goat in Shahbag came up (Ma had stopped the sacrifice of this goat), She laughed and said, "You have noticed that when I used to sit for kirtan the goat would lie down with its head resting on one of my knees and on the other knee the dog used to do the same. Again, during the *loot*⁵⁵ they used to stand on their hind legs and prance around expressing their joy." I said, "Ma, You had mentioned that in his previous birth the goat was a *sannyasi*." Ma said, "Yes, he was in a *sannyasi's* dress. If he had really been a *sannyasi* then all would have been taken care of already (meaning the goat would not have been born again).

⁵⁵ Refer to Footnote 19

At midday Ma was lying down. A boy has sent a letter with a poem expressing his grief. He wrote, "Ma, give me the strength to relieve millions of people's misery, give me the strength to turn the world upside down." Ma replied saying, "Write to him: 'First, try to dispel your idea about the world and then try to do away with your own grief. Take the necessary steps and make efforts to that end.'" This boy had stayed in Tarapeeth for some time doing *sadhan-bhajan* and then on receiving a job offer, he left. That is why Ma wrote (dictated), "Do any job but whatever you do make that conducive to your spiritual effort." He has sent poems expressing his sorrow in many ways about his various failures. Lying down Ma kept listening and laughing while orally composing a rhyming poetic reply, all the while laughing and enjoying it like a child. Sometimes She would lie down and sometimes sit up. The words of the poems are:

1. "With the One you sat in Tarapeeth

Why did you leave Him,

Getting a little light of hope?"

2. "With what hope are you roaming around?

There is no happiness there

As much you roam around, you will get only sorrow

In momentary pleasures do not be forgetful;

Return to your home, where you belong as a child."

3. "Although at present you feel happy,

Remember always there is no light there"

4. "Let not the continuous flow of the Name be stopped,

And then you will know

God is holding you all the time.

Wherever you might be

remember He is always looking at you. "

The boy had further written something like this: Why have You given so many enjoyable things and so much beauty in the world, if it is a sin to enjoy them? You have created everything so beautifully and if it is Your order that all this should be given up, then give me the strength, give me the determination. The words were:

"Who has created the pleasures in various ways

Who has created the images in such beautiful hues?

If renouncing all these is Your rule, then

Give one the strength of the mind to abide by it."

Ma replied, "Whatever beauty you may see in this world, remember it is His manifestation in various modes." On the news about Ma being unwell he had written "Ma, give me all your disease, grief, fever, suffering." To this Ma said, "Write to Baba that here I do not see any disease, grief, fever, suffering and such things, so how can I send you all these?"

In the afternoon before Ma got up many devotees arrived. As Ma got up everyone sat around Her. They kept sitting until after dusk. Then gradually they took leave.

15 August 1938 Monday

Today Abhay arrived from Solan. There is almost no ache in Ma's arm. Last night as I was passing my hand on Her arm, with no one else in the room. Ma was lying with Her eyes closed. She said, "You all want to preserve this body. Well, if you want to see it then keep it, but there seems to be a *bhava* of silence within, can you not see there is not much talking?" I said, "Ma, I have noticed that there is not much talking, but why are You saying such things? When You remain healthy, You tell everyone whatever is needed for their own good. Is this not a blessing for us?" Such talks continued for some time.

16 August 1938 Tuesday

There is nothing special worth mentioning. This afternoon Abhay sang kirtan for a long time and everyone joined in.

17 August 1938 Wednesday

Today the lawyer from Allahabad, Shree Shiv Prasad Singh, came to meet Ma. At around 9:00 a.m. he took Ma to Raipur for a visit. Babydidi and Devendrababu's wife had not yet seen Raipur, so they also went along. After almost two hours they returned. Then food was given to Ma. After this, the doors of Ma's room were closed so that She could rest. At 4:00 p.m. Ma got up. Many people have come to meet Her.

Today Abhay and Kamalakanta told me that for four days (two days in Raipur and two days in Kishenpur) *stotras* kept emanating from Ma's lips like before. First day at Raipur at 11:00 p.m. suddenly the following song emanated from Her lips. Abhay noted as much as he could but it goes without saying that he could not note down everything. Nothing was written clearly and completely, but still as much as possible was done.

1.

yathā rakhe param ambhāvibha ... paronija
 rupapamukha... jano
 sinta... pramālatam... vitatālakam sato...
 salepapa shatopasha... samasata
 narabhiva nama ... paropita
 samjnyam
 pramāvita vritrasva ... prapedyanam
 vidhāvata ... vaveshatu prasambala...
 visaropava ... karottam ... sandra...
 prasandita ... andesutra
 tamaniva ... prasadrishya
 vivasvato
 shvatoshato ... vibhavat
 anupapavam stasita ... lambhadrishya
 ah prita uh preta ... a e oh
 o brahma i pre vari

The second time in Kishenpur Ashram at about 8 in the evening sitting on the western verandah Ma was singing the following song. Later on She said these were God's descriptions and songs of praise.

2

janmavapi ... bhajami ... luka...
 yamastva bhavanam vishalam visrave
 harakam. ... satata bha ...
 ye sambhaya ra kalataye ...
 ye ya ... padavaham ... karomi ye ...
 niralokastvam ...
 ya da tvam shishanam .
 mi ya ram ha ... shubhashubha .
 prapanam de dasam subhasham ve
 bhavardanam .
 saisha... tile bhavani tva hanam
 bhavani hala ... labhe . smarati ... madhava .
 manovesham shamam prasam diva
 nishprabhadi danam prabhamahyam nama mam .
 ha o ... aham bhavam ha ha
 aham samshri . vedam bhavakaransida .
 sarupa vibhavanabham kritodripi sambhava
 padam . prabhakaram . maharudra ...
 bhalalam ... hasami ... yanam . tam ana ...
 namami ... shubhapadam ... loka va .
 shishana praname ... namaste yatra
 janardanam sagayatri . hridardanam ...
 shubhashubha bhavarudra ... kranovishnum .
 samsara . yasmanam prashame samstana ...
 maya . kri va tava . samsarasya ... pranavava ...

samshava savam . pravatava . shesha prava
 tamam nishanati . yaduveti ha pravayatu .
 shishaha tato . pibaveva mamayaham .
 tatkalō shasita kalapam . bhavati vo
 bhavapaham . pravase ta prava niseva .
 pravati ye vasatsa pravasamam
 bhavayatra sarvasvava . samase tathe tava tave
 nistarasya priti yasma jano veshā
 tatra ha tava . karo'pi sah
 mayahi ... syaddha karoti vah . nasmami
 tatre ta sa hara sara tri ... hato . karote ta .
 janani tva tvayave tvayok . ya nitya
 dyutitva . tva hara nah vrino'smi .
 yasmaham ... svami
 kanaketa villoja yo ... so pravatah
 pravala bhavate . kha tvam veva vivade
 aham va ha pravodeva sakro'pi ...
 vibhaya . shakravam kshu ... dayavam
 yo vah kridha ha ha apavaraya
 shasi ho sukravam .

After some time, the following words were spoken:

“jana gawata chalata gharime.”⁵⁶

Perhaps these words refer to those who have just left Ma's presence in tears (the family of Nirajbabu); She thus consoled them and reminded them of the way of the world – people are flung here in the whirlpool of the transitory states of joy and sorrow.

On Thursday at 1 p.m. after the *stotras* had been uttered by Ma while in Raipur, She went for a walk.

3.

me jala nityam ... namaste yasya
 namaste bhava . va ... do ... me ... ya ...
 karasya vishva ... ya ... ve ... vavana ... me .
 shantave samstave pranavi ... bhavartano ...
 evadre samaya yah sambhave paramesha .
 samkhari prapyala samvaveda vishavibhya
 hamvaste samavilam ... pramapyet . Prabhabhava
 samhare samayam . shashakicha prapathe na
 prabhate prabhate ta pramalaja pranate
 na sahaya samasye sandhye sa
 parameshvama kramelleva jikhavityu nila
 pra aha idavilva samaya mamah .
 vidharitra ra ram mahatve chanakya

⁵⁶ This line is in a medieval Hindi dialect, like Avadhi, Magadhi, and Brajabhasha. The meaning more or less is: people are singing now in joy and the very next moment are departing sadly.

sangena shatrusveda hamse ratridah
 ye jaya jajjahara samsma rapraveshya
 vibhashye ... prabhate . prabilakaha
 aha ... namami bhasvara vi
 la la la le vaprave . pra ra
 pra naristah shakti sa patri . sara
 hailo na dhana prabalya yara sti
 pa pa li brahma brahma sva me .
 namasya ta ... ha .
 o m svo'titama (uttered 3-4 times).
 stra atreyadaya ... omasvam
 om so'ha am (repeated 4-5 times in raga bhairava)
 va va re yayam vava balam
 vava yasmaveshya stava va va ...
 yasmai svastave ... yis ...
 syeda bhedabheda vyavaja vidatta
 sakit veda veshya veda lopa balah
 hahah ... nityam sandhyo rupe laveda
 satalasya bhavattam samasta
 to veda hamsa ... samya tale sa talo
 rasto me rokam shatru tokam ...
 laha jakaha . svavastichah evam
 namastavah ah ah shatraspadehatva
 ah vi ah shatruvedma . ah namaste
 brahma prapatti anta prabale
 namaste asya . aham shrabham shrabham .
 tvisha rakshenatrih sveda romatvidam
 pramatte namah prasva
 pravritti ram ravaste bambavittam .
 rakhya ttorim brahmavastavi brahmasvisha
 prativavattam ramyanti .

The following stotra emanated on a moonlit night at Kishenpur Ashram:

4.

prabalarupamiti ... namah . viparama namah .
 vishvabandha ... janyame vibho vipattambhava ...
 sargaveshambhitam janya ... vismritam ...
 vishvabrahmasya ka shambho shankho
 premasya matisattva bhavatah . bhavita bhayo
 jayasna ritave karunasadma ... mala ...
 lakshave . bhavatah vastave ... pravase pra va
 svambhave shambha para vilvambho
 namah bhuvarloka patha . ya a ha .
 yahandhasya vishvasamhara savito
 mahambhabala brahmajna yatha prambhavagra
 prana me pra vida prombhivo kah
 shana svedau pramattanah saraste
 rambhombhabala ambhabala . vishvave ambhave .
 ritava shamate vakyam bhava ... damale

yasyatu . jaya ... shive . apatya varana ...
 sagrama pravati vashya pravadasī tave .
 yo pramati munila ... samsara pramaste
 eva om ha praham . bhavabhiti pravatye ...
 samaha praha pi pramatāh piha . pram ha
 pamala priha ... stih prih .
 sannyasa tru prathame prana pramukha bharanam .
 pra kra lahambhah sannyasiamah .
 pramalapita . ha ha ni sararambhih sthasya
 rahah virambhala bro bri samste tara
 suprati savo vivistasyau . suprasavo ro
 mrityusamhara . pravahah bro braham
 ro mrite . svaha stah namistah vadi
 paha . shrotasyotam ... shobha . om pra pro ...
 stah na kshe ah priite pranametam .
 pratapita mam . pram lellam ple prama
 khasta sru .

Today various topics were discussed with Ma. Babydidi, though still in grief, is quite calm. In Cox's Bazaar after losing all of their seven children, Devendrababu's wife lost her mental balance. This has been written before also. On meeting Ma at Cox's Bazaar she had calmed down quite a bit. She came here a few days ago. When she meets Ma she calms down considerably. What is special about being in Ma's company is that being near Her does not mean there will be no sorrow or suffering. On the contrary, in some cases, the opposite has happened, but one receives from Ma the strength to bear the sorrow and suffering. When Ma heard this, She laughed and said, "Do not think that on coming here you will be rid of what you call calamities: diseases are the rule of life. What is real or great is the capacity for forbearance in the face of whatever calamity or sorrow may befall you."

I said, "Ma has said exactly the truth, that is that the best prayer would be to have tolerance in one's life. In the *Mahabharata*⁵⁷ and other scriptures we are shown that people who were living a spiritual way of life had to undergo a lot of suffering from the worldly point of view. Still, they were unmoved by these and bravely went ahead on their way. The *Pandavas* under Shree Krishna's protection had no end to their sorrows and sufferings. He gave them the strength to brave these odds and that is why they never lost faith or got perturbed. This is the nature of true grace.

"Those who cannot give such a boon -- that is, of strength and patience -- may be able to cure one or two diseases and take credit for it. But how much help can they really give? In reality, they do not have the power to help in the true way." Ma said a few more things. Again the topic came up that in the midst of so many conflicting trends Ma has brought harmony and continues to

⁵⁷ one of the two major Sanskrit epics of ancient India, the other being the *Ramayana*

do so. All that was told cannot be made public because most of the people would not understand it. Many may even misconstrue the true purport behind the revelation. That is why many things remain untold but it is true that whosoever comes in contact with Ma witnesses the above-mentioned phenomena of Ma's *bhava* and is awestruck.

Today, among other topics, Kamakhya Hill came up. There Nirmalbabu's wife had gone out with Ma, where she had experienced fear and something of a trance too. Later Ma said that at the time She had seen small images of many *rishis* and many more things all over the hills. Every detail does not get revealed always. When Birendada and others were with Ma details of this incident emanated more clearly from Ma's lips: "I saw so many *rishis*, *munis* and others all over the Kamakhya Hill: I saw that all of them were emanating from this body (indicating Her body)." When we were left alone and talking She told me many more things about these visions, although She could not tell about all these things in an orderly fashion. But whatever She said was of the same tenor. I was looking at Her face in awe.

Tomorrow is Shree Shree Janmashtami⁵⁸ and there will be kirtan round the clock (*ashtaprahar* or *ahoratra*).

⁵⁸ Birth Anniversary of Shree Krishna

CHAPTER - III

(18 August - 11 September)

18 August 1938 Thursday

Today kirtan started early in the morning at 5:30 a.m. At dusk Ma was taken to Manohar Mandir, where Janmashtami is celebrated. At night Ma sang kirtan for nearly 3 hours along with the ladies. Five to seven ladies came and we all enjoyed it. Everyone kept awake through the night and thus 24 hours kirtan was done. Later on, Ma was given a mouthwash and then lay down for some rest. Ma had stayed with the kirtan party for nearly the entire night.

19 August 1938 Friday

Today, as in previous years, on the occasion of Janmashtami a *Yajna* was performed at Ma's *Yajna* Temple in Anand Chowk. Mention has been made earlier about how the *Yajna* ritual got started here. Shree Kashinath Tankha (Kashmiri) of Anand Chowk is the main sponsor. In their care the *Yajna* is performed every year. Around 8 a.m. Shree Manmathababu, Yogesh Brahmachari and Kamalakanta Brahmachari (all from the Ashram) went to Manohar Mandir for the *Yajna*. Many devotees accompanied Ma in a bus to attend the *Yajna* which was scheduled to start around 12 noon. After Ma arrived, Manmathababu seated Ma in the temple and offered puja to Her, then with Her permission the *Yajna* started. Side by side Satyababu (professor), Harinam, Abhay and others began singing kirtan. Many people had come to see the ceremony. After the *Yajna*, Manmathababu performed *arati* to Ma. *Bhog* was offered to Ma at Shree Kashibabu's residence itself. A Pandit who can do the *patha* well, came and asked for Ma's permission to do the *patha*.

Ma always has the same reply. If anybody wants to establish an Ashram and asks for permission, Ma has the same reply, "Whatever effort you think will enhance your spiritual aspiration, that effort is always a pleasure. Be it by way of kirtan, japa, satsang or by any other means, go on in your spiritual uplift." After obtaining Ma's permission there was *patha* for some time. Everyone was sitting around Ma and in the midst of all this She said to Hariram, "Tell Khukunididi that I have a *Kheyal* to go to Mussourie today." I was at the *Yajna* Temple; Ma was sitting with everyone in the courtyard of Manohar Temple. I immediately rushed to Her and Ma said, "There is not much time left, will you be able to go?" I said, "Why not? I will go immediately to the Ashram and get things ready." As soon as I said this I set out for the Ashram with other devotees. Ma said, "I will now leave for Mussourie and pick you all up en route." That is how it all happened and at about 4 p.m. we proceeded to leave for Mussourie. Shree Manmathadada,

Yogeshdada, Sadhan Brahmachari and a few others stayed at the Ashram. Devendrababu of Cox's Bazaar did not accompany us as they returned to their home directly from the Ashram. Babydidi and Tunu's mother came along.

On reaching Mussourie, we first stopped at Sanatan Dharmashala. Since we were about twelve or thirteen in number, accommodation was complicated. We used Mansaram's partially constructed house for lodging. Word had already spread around that night that Ma was in Mussourie. Many people came to see Her. The owner's manager, the chowkidar (guard) and others were eager to make us comfortable, but not much was required. At 11 p.m. everyone went to bed. For the last few days Shashidada from Chattagram has also been in Ma's company and would be returning to Calcutta tomorrow.

20 August, 1938 Saturday

Early this morning the owner of the house and many others came over to see Ma. One lady who made Ma her daughter during the last visit has come along with her own mother and was showering her love on Ma in so many ways. At 1 p.m. food was offered to Ma.

Ma got up from Her rest in the afternoon. Once an incident took place. A devotee had come with his family to see Ma. They told Ma they were upset because their educated daughter had married one of their close relatives in spite of their dissent. The girl's mother had a breakdown because of this. The result was that the pain brought on by the incident caused the mother to become attracted to God to the point of losing attachment to worldly life. This happened about seven or eight years ago. During these years the lady has advanced on the spiritual path and there are no signs of remorse over her daughter. But on the persistent and earnest pleas from the daughter and son-in-law to accept them back, she said to Shree Shree Ma, "What do I do, Ma? I am not inclined toward any worldly things now and I am quite satisfied with the path I follow." Ma told her, "Look, you do one thing: take *diksha* and later give *diksha* to your daughter and son-in-law and accept them not as your daughter and son-in-law but as your disciples." Later the lady did this. When the topic came up in the evening Ma said to me, "Look, I could see that it was not that the mother was driven by the attachment of motherhood that she wanted her daughter and son-in-law back. The mother's mind was quite calm and composed and that is why this arrangement happened. Not in every case would it be the same. Notice another aspect: it is due to this daughter that the mother is now progressing on the spiritual path. The feeling of the futility of worldly life arose in her, and on her path she began having various spiritual experiences. Hence, out of gratitude she is obliged to do good for the daughter." Saying this She kept smiling and again She said, "Whenever, whatever is required happens this way only." She continued again, "Whatever *samskara* or

whatever *bhava* one has within yields fruit accordingly. There is no doubt about that. According to the type of *bhava* one has, the circumstances are created on their own."

Then again when a related topic came up Ma said, "Look, in my childhood when I became a bride and was with Ashu's mother⁵⁹ in Atpara village, my neighbours, then the ladies of lower caste (Shudra), used to help me a lot; this I have narrated before. They had such beautiful and simple feelings that a young bride alone was finding it difficult to carry out all the chores of the household and that is why they used to help. On account of such goodness in them I have narrated these stories again and again to you. Yesterday they were with me in Mussourie in my thoughts and that is why I am telling this story again. See, what helpful and beautiful feelings they had. Thinking that I used to find it difficult to carry out the household chores, they used to help me a lot, and all this in secrecy, so that Ashu's mother and others might not come to know about it. They used to wash the utensils and keep them submerged in the pond and all I had to do was to bring them back from there so nobody came to know. In the rural countryside gossip and rumours were rife and that is why they used to do so much for this body in secret. Do you know what else they used to do? They used to grind the condiments and pass them from under the bamboo mat fence and no one knew. Again they used to boil milk and collect the best mangoes for me and at the slightest opportunity they used to literally force me to eat it. But I never spoke to them and used to cover my head with the veil. Next to Bholonath's house was a house with many ladies. They used to look after this body in so many ways. One of them was Rabi's mother and another was Mauja's mother and especially those two looked after me more than the others. From my side, whatever special or good things came my way, I used to give those things to them. For example while eating something good, I would eat only a bit and the rest I would give to them on the plate. Even though they were very poor, still they opposed my giving. Even veiled, I used to behave in such a manner that they were forced to accept it." I laughed and said, "Ma, I can see that you have been receiving worship from the very beginning. Whether anybody knew it or not, whatever had to happen has happened." Ma started laughing and I also joined in.

In the evening we took Ma to the Sanatan Dharmashala (Shivalaya) and there the priest and others paid their obeisance to Ma and said, "Ma, it is our misfortune that You came to our dharmashala and then left." Ma said, "Baba, why do you speak to your daughter like this? Have the feeling of oneness; all places belong to that One, and I am staying at my father's place only." Saying such things She satisfied everyone and returned. The Punjabi gentleman who had been travelling from place to place in order to be with Ma, having started from Punjab and going through Solan to

⁵⁹ Her elder sister-in-law, wife of Bholanath's elder brother, Shree Revati Mohan Chakravarty.

finally reach Dehradun, did not know Ma had left Dehradun. To day as I came out, I saw that he has now arrived here from Dehradun. This gentleman is from the Sikh community. On seeing him Ma said, "See Baba has arrived here also. I had a feeling Baba would arrive any moment." At dusk many people in the area came over to Ma's place to do kirtan which went on for a while. At 10 p.m. Ma went in to rest. Babydidi, Abhay and I sleep in Ma's room. Seated on his bed, Abhay began to sing some kirtan and Ma also sang a few songs and various topics were discussed for some time. At about midnight we went to sleep.

21 August 1938 Sunday

Today when Ma got up we took Her for a short walk. In this hilly terrain when one comes out of the house, one has to go up and down the slopes. Since Ma's body was still weak we did not go too far and then came back. On returning we saw many people had come for Ma's *darshan*. There were a few Bengalis among them. At around 10 a.m. Ma was given food.

As Ma got up in the afternoon She began to say with a smile, "You know what I saw yesterday? Three persons had come to finish off this body. They were thinking 'whatever has to happen will happen and we will finish off this body', they had small guns in their hands (guns of their *bhava*, what else?) and one person came closer and lifted his gun. In the meantime this body had a strange change in form, the eyes became illumined and large and I touched the middle point of his forehead between the brows and scratched it a little.. As soon as this happened the person seemed to have become paralysed. As soon as he fell down the other two came running and started saying to the fallen man, 'Why were you doing such a thing? We will tie you up and leave', and saying this they tied him up and left.

I could see that though they had said that, they tied him up loosely thinking with so many people around, that the moment they left he would be able to finish off this body and then leave easily. This was the sort of feeling they had though outwardly it appeared differently. So they tied him up and left; then everyone else left. I started moving around closer to the one who had been tied up and left behind. The more eagerness the person had to finish off this body the nearer I moved to him. This continued for some time until your Didima (Ma's mother) came in and called out to me, 'Come and have your food!' and so I left. The eagerness in that person began to recede because he thought since the body had moved away what was the need of keeping this feeling of eagerness alive?" Narrating this part of the story, She laughed and said, "The person remained tied to finish off this body." Abhay and I were listening to this story and we pleaded with Her to tell us the rest. We said, "What happened next? The person remained inside the house to finish you off; this is not a comfortable situation." Ma did not reply. In the afternoon we took Ma for a long outing on the

Uttarkashi route. On Ma's orders Manmathadada has arrived here today.

22 August 1938 Monday

Just as Ma got up from bed and sat down, people came to have an audience with Her. Ma was conversing with everyone in a central hall. At about 10:30 a.m. food was given to Ma. She did not have the inclination to rest at noon. Abhay wanted to say something privately so everyone was asked to leave the room.

Last night Ma again did not have the inclination to lie down at all and She kept sitting up for a long time. For the last few days we have noticed that Ma is getting quieter from within. Whatever She says outwardly seems to be strained but somehow She has managed to speak. Since this morning the feeling of quietude was very apparent. At 9:30 a.m. after being fed a little She lay down. It appeared She could not keep Her eyes open in spite of all efforts, as if Her body had lost the power of mobility.

In the afternoon She got up and sat down. Seeing that She was talking a little, I took a few letters to read out to Her in private, but after some time I noticed a change in Her demeanor; She was having difficulty keeping Her eyes open. The Punjabi gentleman and his son (both are teachers by profession) have come and were sitting near Ma.

Each day in the mornings and evenings they come and sit near Ma. She went to the central hall for some time but returned and lay down. In the evening She again got up and sat down in a lethargic fashion with eyes closed. Many ladies had come to the room. When Ma was spoken to She opened Her eyes with a start and replied, "Why?" There seemed to be indistinctness in Her speech. The whole night was spent in this manner.

23 August 1938 Tuesday

Early this morning Ma's *bhava* was more or less normal. Abhay and I sang the "Name" as every day. Later Abhay sang a few songs. After that Ma also sang one or two songs lying down. Babydidi, Abhay and I were sitting with Her. While talking, various topics came up one of them being about Ma's childhood days. Ma said, "In Kheora when I was very small and naked mostly, I would listen to the songs sung by my father and others and later when I used to be walking alone in the village lanes I would sing these songs at the top of my voice, so many of Krishna, many of Ma⁶⁰ and, behold there, tears would be rolling profusely from my eyes. Seeing this and listening to the sound of the singing all people used to take me in their arms with much affection and ask me to

⁶⁰ Songs in praise of Kali, Durga, and other forms of Devi

sing, but then I would not sing a word. Seeing that I was in tears while singing all alone, one of my father's uncles would put water in his eyes and tease me."

Again She said to me, (for a few days now She has been addressing me as 'Tui')⁶¹ "You all have seen that when this body went to Kheora or Vidyakut, all the village folks, even Muslims, used to come in groups and show their affection to it. By the will of God everyone used to like this body. Even those who had not shown any sadness when their daughters left for their in-laws' places, would say, 'We do not know why but we feel such a yearning for Her as soon as She goes away.' And this body also had its own way for when the time came to cry it would do so in total abandon to its heart's content and there was no inhibition or shyness about it." Saying this She started laughing. I said, "Of course Ma, why would you leave without having everyone in tears? You cried to your heart's content to make even those weep who usually do not shed tears and only then the bride⁶² left for her in-laws'." At this everyone started laughing and so did Ma. From early morning after the kirtan and even before She left Her bed all this was going on. Since the day was getting on, we all got up. At around 9 a.m. I washed Ma's face and took Her to the Sikh Gurdwara. We had heard that around this time they have *bhajan*, *patha*, etc. there. After getting there we saw that the *bhajans* had concluded and that the discourse was in progress. Ma sat there with us for some time and then we came back. A few ladies came and there was some conversation, singing etc. and after that Ma was given food. After some time the doors of Her room were closed but Ma did not have any inclination to lie down. At our request She was closing Her eyes, then opening them partially and again closing them; She would speak out something or the other giggling like a child and making us laugh too. This continued for a long time.

In the afternoon Ma got up and went to the central hall and sat down. Many people came and conversation was going on. It was decided that we would go to the highest point here in Mussourie, namely "Difo". Two rickshaws were hired. Ma, Babydidi, Abhay and I set out. The Punjabi gentleman and his son also tagged along. They started walking. To be with Ma was their sole intention. En route it got dark due to the low clouds. We were enjoying the journey very much as we went along. On reaching the church we were told that the rickshaws would not go further. We had to hire a *dandi*⁶³. Abhay and I began to walk.

The *dandi* carried Ma and Babydidi alternately. From 'Difo' Badrinath is clearly visible although when we got there it was covered in clouds so we could not see anything. After wandering around the area for a while, we began our journey back down the hill. Once we got to the church we

⁶¹ A very informal address used for a close friend, associate or younger family member or even persons lower in status are addressed in this way.

⁶² meaning Ma Herself.

⁶³ carriage handled by porters



Shree Shree Ma's Residence, Ashtagram



Swami Akhandananda Giri (Father of Gurupriya Didi)



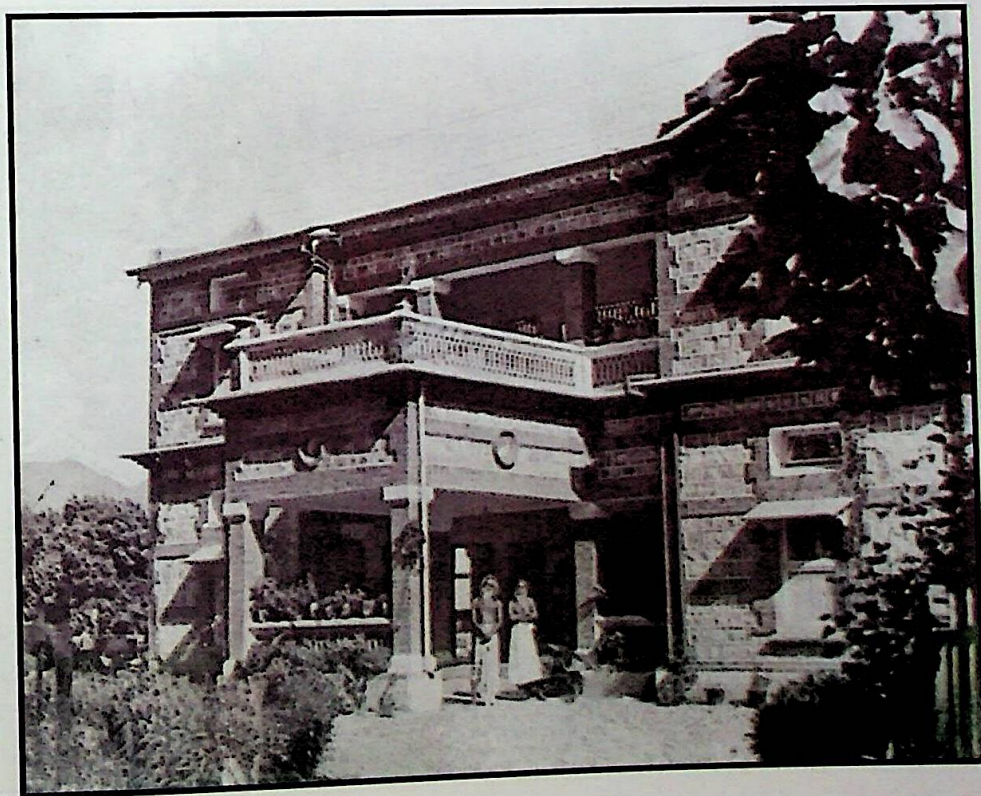
Shree Shree Ma dressed as Shree Krishna



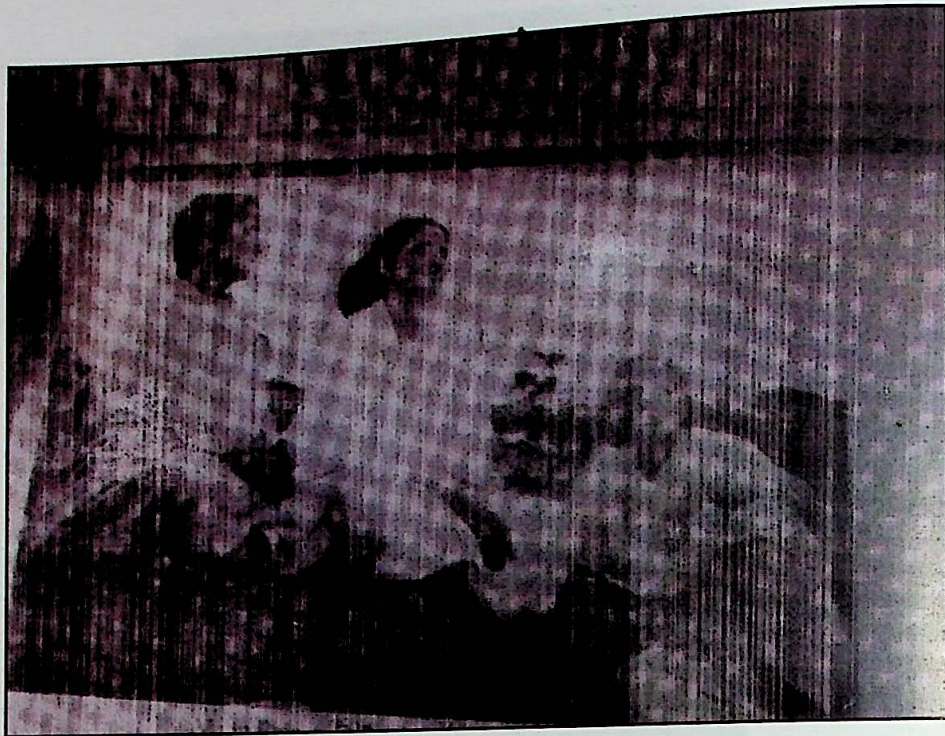
“Yogibhai”, Raja Durga Singh of Baghat, Solan



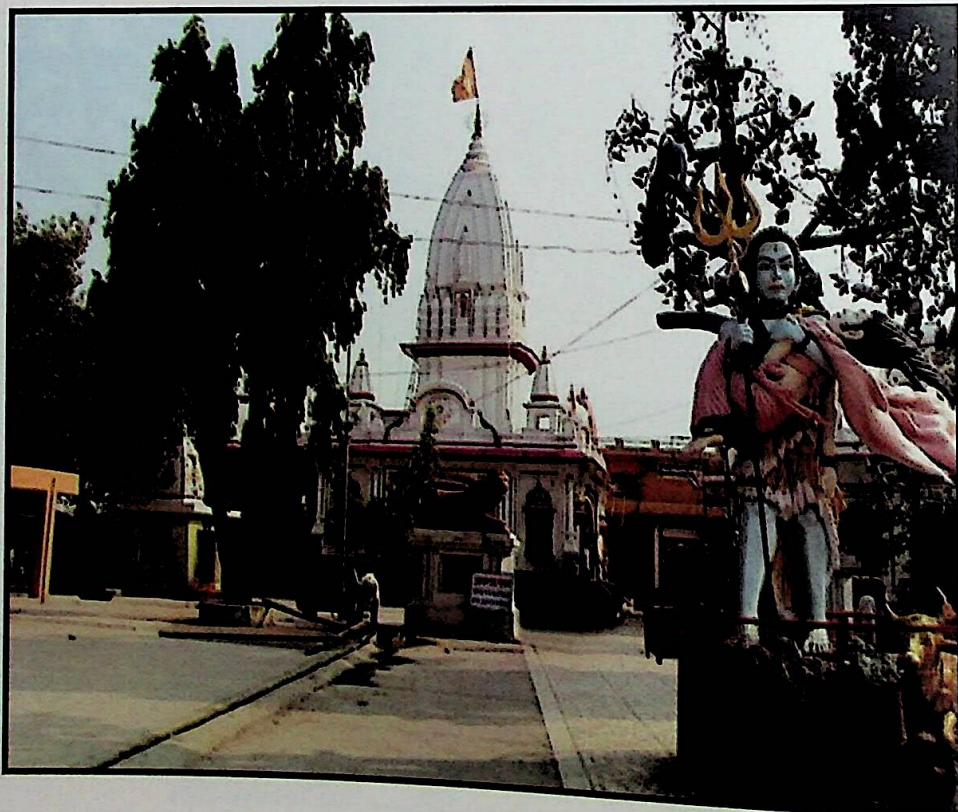
Shree Shree Ma with Gurupriya Didi (right) and Hirandidi (left)



Kishenpur Ashram, Dehradun



Shree Shree Ma with Didima and Gurupriya Didi, Raipur



Daksheshwar Mandir, Kankhal, Haridwar



Brahmakund, Haridwar



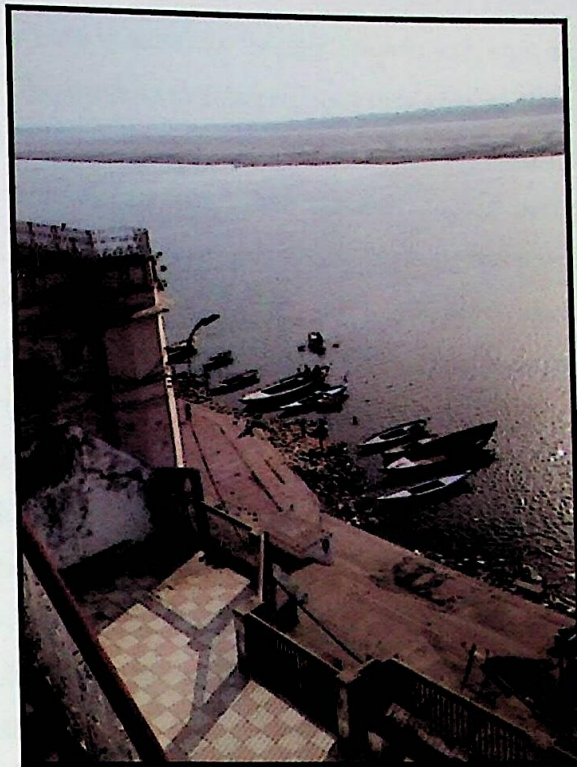
Matrinivas, Vindhyachal



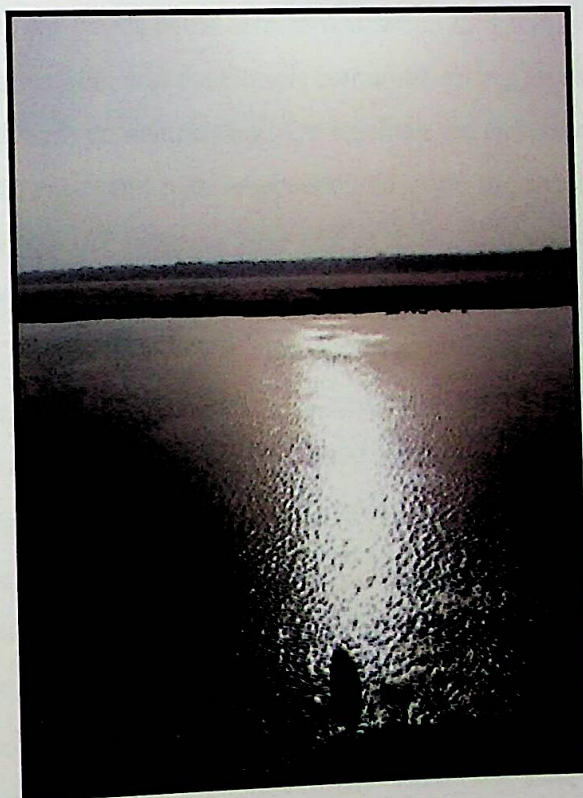
Shree Shree Ma at the residence of Justice Niraj Nath Mukerji, Allahabad, with his youngest daughter, Dr. Bithika Mukerji at Her feet



Platform of Kharaushthi tala. Now an archeological excavation site



A view of the river Ganga from Shree Shree Ma's
Ashram and Kanyapeeth, Varanasi



Sunrise on the Ganga, Varanasi



all sat down. One of the dandi-bearers said to Ma, "Look, Mataji, (they do not know Ma but these *Paharis* [hill people] address elderly ladies as "Mataji") this is a church; here the *sahibs* (foreigners/Englishmen) pray to God. Like we pray to *Ishwar* (God) they pray to their *Khuda* (God)." Then the other porter took the lead to explain, "Mataji, it is all the same 'One'. Just as a mother has four sons, all the four sons have that same one mother." Then again the former porter took the lead to explain something more on this aspect. Both of them got busy explaining the scriptures to Ma! Ma was also behaving like a small child listening to such lofty talks. Ma never allows anyone's *bhava* to get spoiled. Seeing this their enthusiasm only multiplied in explaining aspects about the Almighty. They went on to say that every thing in the world is illusory and should be renounced, even though it is very difficult to do. And so on and so forth. Ma said "Really, Pitaji, is all this *maya*? Is it required to renounce pleasures?" They said, "Of course." Immediately Ma stood up from the *dandi* and in the playful mood of a prankster, said with a slight smile, "Pitaji, on getting this advice of yours, I now renounce this indulgence and am leaving the *dandi*. I am walking back!" Saying so She started walking and we followed Her. Then the porters got afraid. They hurried towards Ma and said, "No, Ma! You get on the *dandi*!" Ma said, "No, Guruji, with your preaching I have gained profound knowledge and for the time being, I will not use the *dandi* and will walk." Speaking like this, She started laughing and began addressing the porters as Guruji, bowing to them with folded palms. The porters said to Ma with folded hands, "That from us porters you have gained this knowledge, You are blessed, and Mataji, that our words could inspire You, we in turn feel blessed." Carrying on this playful *leela*, Ma continued walking and the Gurujis continued giving Her their sermons on various topics. The glory of satsang went on manifesting. On reaching the rickshaw stand before getting on the rickshaw She called, "Guruji," and both responded and came to Her. Then they read out some text to Ma. Before stepping on the rickshaw She said to them, "Guruji, please do remember this little girl, otherwise how shall I survive? And on gaining such profound knowledge these words are being uttered: do pray to God a little." The disciple (Ma) said many more things as a way of advising them and the Gurujis with all seriousness agreed to follow Her advice. Then Ma said, "Khukuni, I have not received Gurujis' *prasad*." I looked around to find two shops selling fruits and sweets. On Ma's saying so and understanding Her intentions, I immediately bought some sweets and distributed them to everyone there. Ma said, "I will be the last one to take." And that is how it turned out, after passing the sweets around to about 18 porters and 9 other people, Ma took a little of the sweets. Again with folded hands She said to the porters, "Please do remember this little girl." With enthusiasm they replied, "We will not be able to forget You. Next year at this time we will miss You a lot. Such coincidences do not happen often." Then they said, "Should we leave now?" Ma replied, "You are Gurujis, what can I say?" Then with teacher-like authority one of them said,

"Alright, we are telling You: You may leave now." Ma laughed and said, "Then I am taking leave of you all." Our rickshaws started. They kept standing, watching us leave. It was getting dark due to fog all around. Loneliness reigned. Against that background, the experience of wending our way back amidst discussions on spiritual topics gave us a lot of pleasure. We got to our rooms before sunset.

24 August 1938 Wednesday

This morning while Ma was sitting on Her bed, She started repeating, "*Haribol, Haribol*" and in a short while the expression on Her face changed. Nothing else noteworthy.

25 August, 1938 Thursday

Again today nothing noteworthy. Tomorrow on the anniversary of the death of her husband, Babydidi has arranged for kirtan from dawn to dusk and distribution of *prasad*. For the occasion the brahmacharis like Yogeshdada, Sadhan, Shashanka, Shachi and Kamalakanta have arrived from Dehradun. Preparations for the kirtan have begun. At dusk Abhay started singing:

Sing you all, oh, sing you all

The name of Guru-Brahma.

O brothers, by singing His name

You will reach the sphere of Chidananda. (refrain: Sing you all etc.)

Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu,

Guru is the fathomless ocean of love

Guru is Narayana and Shambhu (Shiva)

Guru is Mother and Father. (refrain)

Come, O Highest of the High, come along.

All the world is praying for Your appearance,

Take Your seat on the lotus of our hearts.

Come, O Lord, come along! (refrain)

Everyone joined in. It turned out to be quite nice. At night the hall was decorated and *adhivasa*⁶⁴ took place and then the kirtan started. We went to sleep around midnight. Ma also went to bed.

26 August 1938 Friday

⁶⁴ Singing of introductory songs invoking the presence of Mahaprabhu and His associates

Kirtan began early this morning with the Name of "*Ma*" being sung first and then,
Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare.

This continued from dawn to dusk. At sundown, after kirtan everyone ate. There was some discussion that Abhay and Yogeshdada would leave for Uttarkashi tomorrow. From Uttarkashi, a sadhu has come for the darshan of Ma and along with him Sadananda has arrived having received a message from Ma to come.

27 August 1938 Saturday

Yogeshdada and Abhay started out for Uttarkashi around one p.m. after having their meal. Abhay is around seventeen or eighteen years old, but within he has a beautiful sense of detachment and renunciation. He wants to stay in solitude and do his *sadhana*, sing the praises of God and advance on his spiritual path. That is why he took Ma's permission and started on his journey. A young man, probably around 18 years old, has come here with us from Calcutta for a job; he too kept saying to all, "I do not have any inclination to return to my home town." His name is Anukul. Seeing the other two taking off for Uttarkashi, he also had a desire to go with them, but could not gather enough courage to say it. I asked him, "Do you want to go?" He was quite happy and said, "If I am allowed, I would like to go." I could not tell Ma about this immediately because of being in a hurry. So after Abhay set out on his journey, I told Ma and immediately She said, "Is it so? Call Anukul immediately." He had gone to get some water and Ma was impatient to meet him. Anukul returned. He was asked and he was ready to go. Immediately Ma gave him Her woollens, warm clothing, blankets, etc., and whatever else was required and packed him off. She asked us to provide a porter for him that would get him in contact with Yogeshdada. After making all these arrangements Ma started laughing. Everyone was surprised. He had come for a job and now he was sent off to Uttarkashi for spiritual pursuits. There was no second thought about it. As soon as there was a willingness and consent, immediately everything was arranged. I said, "Ma, You are finished with sending off all the people you had to send off, so now can You please have some rest?" Ma laughed and lay down.

Tomorrow Babu Shiv Prasad Singh is coming from Allahabad to Dehradun for a few hours to meet Ma. He repeatedly writes, "If Ma is at the Dehradun Ashram at that time, I will stay for a couple of hours longer." When we asked Ma about this She said, "Let us see what happens then." There has been a surprising change in Shiv Prasad Singh after meeting Ma. Advocate Shree Jitendra Nath Mukherjee from Allahabad has written about Shiv Prasad Singh, "There is a surprising transformation in Shiv Prasad and even the local VIPs are surprised by this. Shiv Prasadbabu is a

renowned advocate of Allahabad High Court. He has met Ma only a few times and immediately this surprising transformation has taken place. One who could not live without wine and meat has now even stopped eating onion and garlic. He used to make fun of monks when he would see them and now for the sake of Ma he is ready to give up everything. Stories of such a change at the first sight of a saint can be read in novels but in actual life such occurrences are very rare. Stories can be recounted of one staying with Ma for some time and then gradually being reformed, but such a sudden change after meeting Ma only a few times is rare." He went on to write, "Shiv Prasadbabu recounts the praises for Ma anywhere and everywhere. Like a child he feels elated thinking of himself as Ma's son and when people make fun of him, he either leaves right then and there or tells them to hush up." Ma has probably given us a glimpse about how one can change so drastically just by meeting Her once.

At 4 p.m. Ma got up and said, "Let us go to Dehradun." Preparations were made immediately. Kamalakanta, Shree Manmathadada and I accompanied Ma. The rest stayed back in Mussourie. A boy by the name of Shailendra Chakrabarty had come to Mussourie for kirtan and he too joined us to return to Dehradun. His house is close to the Ashram. We were in Dehradun in two hours. Again for one or two days Ma has not been well

28 August 1938 Sunday

This morning Shree Shiv Prasadbabu arrived. Ma was lying down and he prostrated at Ma's feet. It was as if his heart was yearning for this moment. Whenever Shiv Prasadbabu comes here he hires a car for Ma to take her on trips. For some reason the car will be going to Mussourie at 11 a.m. Hearing this Ma asked, "Khukuni, do you want to go to Mussourie for an outing?" I said, "Let us go." It was 10 a.m.; after that we had some breakfast and took off for Mussourie. Shiv Prasadbabu came with us. I have noticed that Ma is like a child when She sees a car is about to go for an excursion. But there are times when many cars are lined up with people asking to take Ma for an outing and She refuses to go. On the way we were talking about this and laughing.

The surprising fact is that for the last two or three days Ma has eaten next to nothing and Her body is weak. Swamiji and Manmathadada had objected to Ma's going back to Dehradun, but since it was Ma's *Kheyal* they could not say anything. At 3 p.m. when the gate (on the Mussourie road) opens, we were supposed to return. After only an hour's stay and rest in Mussourie, we will have to start on our way back. Swami Akhandanandaji feels very sad when he is away from Ma. Nothing else disturbs him more. Even when he is in the close vicinity of Ma, he does not indulge in sitting close to Ma or in discussions with Her. Silently he keeps doing whatever work he can do for Ma's service to the best of his ability. That Ma is close by is a matter of great joy for him. Mostly he stays

in his room. Yesterday also when Ma was returning he did not object or ask to accompany Ma but the sadness showed on his face and Ma also noticed this. Today while on the journey She said, "We will go and meet Baba." I cannot say if his sadness was the reason for Ma's visit to Mussourie for such a short time.

Once we got to Mussourie everyone there was surprised. After staying there for an hour Ma started back for Dehradun. We decided that we could be in Mussourie for a little more time and return at 6 p.m., when the gate opens. Ma said, "Let us leave at 3 p.m." When we returned many people were waiting to meet Ma. A few ladies from Saharanpur had come. They had fasted all day and came carrying plenty of food for Ma. Sarada, Lakshmi Rani, Hariram Joshi and others gradually came in. Then I understood why Ma had insisted on the timing of 3 p.m. It is not that She does this regularly but sometimes She does like this. At 11 p.m. Ma went off to bed. Shiv Prasadbabu stayed back today; he will leave tomorrow.

29 August 1938 Monday

Today Shiv Prasad Bhai invited Ma for a trip to Raipur. At 9 a.m. Manmathadada, Shiv Prasad Bhai and I set off for Raipur with Ma. Bishu Brahmachari is there and made all the arrangements. We cooked and had our meals there and came back to Kishenpur Ashram at 3 p.m. A few people came to meet Ma. Thus talking about various things the day passed. Discussions are under way about establishing a Mahila Ashram (Ashram for ladies). Shree Shiv Prasad Singh is willing to help us with this.

30 August 1938 Tuesday

Nothing noteworthy today. Ma is not well and there is no rest for Her as people are coming one after another.

This afternoon Ma was lying down with Her eyes closed and I was sitting beside Her. She began to speak with a gentle smile, "What a wonder, you see this gross body⁶⁵ (showing Her body), you know how all gross material objects put together make one body? Do you know how it is? Putting together all that is unmanifested in the gross form, one whole subtle body⁶⁶ is composed. Again, the causal body⁶⁷ situated in existence. It is not that these are seen separately. It is as if everything were present in one interlaced whole. Again the super causal body⁶⁸ beyond the causal, it is exactly what it is like. Moreover, there is in fact nothing like gross, subtle or causal. It cannot be

⁶⁵ Ma says, "*Sthula Sharira*." This is the Sanskrit term for gross body.

⁶⁶ Ma says, "*Sukshma Sharira*." This is the Sanskrit term for subtle body.

⁶⁷ *Karana Sharira* (also called *Linga Sharira*)

⁶⁸ *Mahakarana* in Sanskrit

said what is or what is not - that is all!" Saying this, laughing in great joy like a child, She clapped and seemed to have dismissed all this, throwing away everything to the four winds! Then again She said, "This *bhava* is nothing new, it was like that forever, the same *bhava*, but only now has it been told and expressed." Saying this She kept quiet.

Ma got up in the afternoon. I was sitting in Ma's room. Conversation was going on about various things. The topic about grace (*kripa*) and action (*karma*) came up and Ma was saying: "*Kri-pa*, that is to say - *kri* is *krita* meaning one's action (*karma*) and *pa*, means what one gets as the result of one's *karma*. That means: as you do, so you get⁶⁹. Again how does it manifest? You may not have done anything now for which you are getting the results at present, but you must have done actions in the past and those results are manifesting now, even though you are not doing anything to deserve such results now. You can look at this from another perspective: the One who is showing kindness (God) - my talks are all topsy-turvy! -- *kri-paro*, meaning: you can do so. The One who is merciful is creating the circumstances (*kri*) so that you get the results (*pa*). It is not that you are getting the results of your own actions. It is something like this: suppose a labourer comes to your house for work but his body is weak, so he is unable to do all of the work. Out of kind-heartedness you give him some extra money. This is real *kripa*"⁷⁰

"Again, for example, you are in a car and it breaks down; the driver then gets out and is pushing the vehicle. You are also pushing along with him, so you are also helping to reach the destination. And then you pay him too." Saying so She started laughing and again said, "When a person receives grace by which he realizes the import of grace in full measure, at that point he realizes that just as a spark can burn all that even a person cannot possibly gather together, similarly grace is always showering infinitely and uninterruptedly - grace manifests to him in this form. Then he realizes that to whatever extent he may engage in *sadhan-bhajan* as prescribed by the world, that is not enough to give him the power to achieve so much.

"It is all through His mercy and grace and thus one begins to float in the ocean of mercy and grace. To realize this true experience of receiving mercy and grace is to realize how much progress one must make and what kind of *karma* (actions) one should perform for the import of grace to manifest." Saying this Ma became serious, and then said, "Wherever there is talk about giving and receiving, result and its cause and topics of a similar *bhava*, only there such discussions will come up. Now listen to this fact: *as there is nothing else but instruments devised by God, then how meaningful would it be to say that by karma alone one receives kripa? It is kripa and kripa alone,*

⁶⁹ "as you sow, so you reap"

⁷⁰ "*Kri*" is the Sanskrit root for the verb "to do;" "*pa*" in Bengali means "get."

that is all. There are no questions of any cause there."⁷¹

Seva (Sarada), Lakshmi, Kaushalya Ma, Hariram and many others have arrived. As soon as Seva arrives she shuts her eyes and sits down and then cannot easily open her eyes, getting into some sort of a trance. Ma was talking to everyone on various subjects and Seva opened her eyes. Ma was saying, "Do not do anything secretive then there will be no secrets." I said, "What about *Ishta mantra*"⁷²? Ma said, "This one thing one should keep as a great secret. There should be no displacement or dissipation. If you plant a seed and do not cover it up the plant will not sprout, and every day if you dig out the seed to look at it, then there is no chance of its sprouting. With a lot of care plant the seed, nourish it with water and care, and you will see in due time it sprouts and starts growing steadily." Seva said, "Ma, if there is a strong wind then the plant will be harmed. What then is the remedy?" Ma said, "Then the small plant must be covered appropriately. Can you not see that to prevent a sapling from getting destroyed due to a hail storm it must be covered appropriately? Then it should be fenced to protect it from cows, goats etc. Thus if it is secure and protected, the same tree will grow up one day and be the protector of so many people."

Ma and I were sitting in the room and while talking, the topic about Ma's states of *bhava* in Autsahi came up (this has been mentioned before also). That day Her *bhava* was a spectacular one. Every hair on Her body and even each hair on Her head was standing on end, so much so that even the root of each hair swelled forming big pimples with blood oozing out. Her body looked blood red. She was on a verandah and began rolling like a serpent, in *bhava*. Her body stayed on the verandah while Her head touched the ground below and rested there. One can only imagine what length the body had assumed. It was really a stunning spectacle.

The topic then came up about something that happened in the village of Dhankora (in Dhaka) in late Dineshbabu's house. Kirtan had started upon Ma's wish. She got into a profound trance-like state during kirtan. While in that *bhava*, She said, "You all should do kirtan in this house at least once a week." From that time on they have arranged for kirtan to be done every week in that house and for the last ten or twelve years they have been keeping this tradition.

Then we discussed the time when Ma was in Shahbag (Dhaka) and when once She had gone to the Siddheshwari temple. One person came and trying to test Ma or with some other intention approached Her and said, "Can you tell me why I have come here? I myself will not tell You anything because You can read one's mind. Let me see if You can do that." Ma smiled and said, "I am not replying from these lips; you try and understand." The man returned to his house to find

⁷¹ That is why *kripa* is said to be "*ahaituki*"--- causeless.

⁷² The mantra received from one's Guru for the invocation of the chosen deity

that the prayer with which he had gone to Ma had been fulfilled, so the next day he went to Ma, weeping and asking for forgiveness and paid his obeisance.

We kept on discussing various things until it was night-time. Ma's health has deteriorated further. She has a cough and cold and an ache in Her stomach but most of the time She does not take any note of it. She says, "The problem is that all of you keep asking, that is why I say this and that happened and you say it is a disease. But I do not feel uncomfortable. *I am always as I am.*" I said, "That is why the diseases do not get cured."

31 August 1938 Wednesday

At nine this morning Ma said, "Khukuni, at 11 o'clock, as soon as the road opens let us go to Mussourie." And that is what happened. We somehow managed to eat something and then started for Mussourie. Manmathadada stayed on at Kishenpur Ashram while Ma, Kamalakanta, Shailen and I went on to Mussourie. It took us about an hour and a half to get there.

1 September 1938 Thursday

Nothing noteworthy today. Ma's health is quite bad: She has a cough, cold and stomach ache due to indigestion. She eats practically nothing.

2 September 1938 Friday

When Abhay was here Ma had said, "I can see that somebody will stumble and fall." Abhay came to me and said, "Didi, Ma says someone will stumble and fall." A few days passed and everyone forgot what Ma had said. Yesterday I stumbled and fell. Due to the fall I had cuts all over my body. I went to tell Ma. She laughed and said, "Finally, after so many days the fall has happened." Then I recalled what Ma had said a few days back.

Once we were talking about many things and She said, "Look, if you plant a seed and take care of it, finally a tree sprouts from it as if a Yogi is sitting upright. The calm and composed Yogi goes on doing *tapasya* and then what happens is that flowers bloom and fruits form and again from those fruits *lakhs* of seeds are formed. These seeds will again sprout to give trees, flowers and fruits. So what is in the beginning is the same in the end. So I say, initially one is '*be-danta*' (without teeth) and also finally one is '*bedanta*' (in old age) but the whole trouble is with the set of teeth in the intervening period. What is there other than the One?" Saying this She started laughing and said again, "As regards what I said about the initial and latter stages, there is nothing like 'before' and

'after'. *What you see in the intervening stage is the play of illusion; actually it is all One.*⁷³"

Ma and I were sitting in a room and this came up, "What we generally say ~ 'if He makes me do it only then can I do it; 'He' knows, etc.'" to which Ma then said, "First of all try to find out who He is, what relation do you have with Him, His whereabouts and only then can you say 'whatever He is making me do I am doing.' Now you do not know 'Him'. However, by referring to 'Him' repeatedly the inclination to keep asking and enquiring about 'Him' may be aroused."

Ma has an illness. She has a stomach ache, cough and cold among other things. We keep pleading with Her, "Ma, why are You living with all these? You can just wish them away." Ma laughed and said, "Everything is my doll and I cannot help but play with my dolls. I keep on playing with one or more dolls. Sometimes I play with you all and similarly as you see now, I am playing with three or four dolls (cough, cold, palpitations, aches, etc.) and sometimes the body becomes 'quiet' and then the play is on with the 'quiet doll' and when there is speech, the play is on with the 'speech doll'. Thus the play is going on with some doll or the other as the requirement arises." Saying this She started clapping playfully and laughing like a child and said, "From your perspective, as long as you can see this body, the play is on." Many a time Ma has absolutely no connection with the godly, worldly or spiritual dimensions and seems to be in absolute peace as if this were also a play. Ma says, "Call it play or whatever else, it is with one's own Self. You know how it actually is? Just as you move a toe or a finger or are clapping and laughing, is it not true that you perceive the body and that is why you can perceive all these plays?" She further added, "The act of playing and the act of seeing are of the same One. Again, you see, there is no such thing as playing or seeing."

At dusk many people came, among them were Punjabi ladies, some of them who had seen Ma before. They were saying, "Ma, we do not feel like leaving Your company." One lady said, "Didi, the moment I leave home to come and meet Ma, I get very anxious, wondering how soon shall I be able to reach Ma and submit myself at Her feet."

Talking about various things Ma brought up the topic of Nirmalbabu's demise. She said to me, "All these Punjabi ladies were there at that time." She began speaking in Hindi. "See, how splendid. When Nirmalbabu was in Haridwar he wrote to me while I was in Mussourie, 'Ma, please permit me, I want to come to You.' I dictated to Jyotish to write back to him, 'When the time comes we shall meet.' When Nirmalbabu received the letter, he left Haridwar and came to Mussourie. When he reached the entrance of the house, he saw Me from the road and said, 'Ma, I

⁷³ An instance of punning: *be-danta* (toothless) and Vedanta, the philosophical doctrine which proclaims that all is One and that duality is an illusion.

have arrived, is it my time to come?' I said, 'Yes, the time has come.' We were staying at Sanatan Dharmashala and since there were no rooms available for them they moved to the Gurdwara of the Punjabis. He used to visit us every day and ate most of his meals at night there. One day I was playfully making jokes about Taru's Gopal and then Babaji (Nirmalbabu) among other things said, 'My house, property -- all things -- belong to Gopal. I have nothing of my own.' He was quite an introvert and with great difficulty some things would come out of his lips. One day he had a wish. He said, 'Everyone cooks for Ma; I will also prepare *paratha* and vegetable curry for Ma today.' This he did. One day he came back from an outing and I saw his face was reddened with a darkish hue. I asked him, 'Are you unwell?' He said, 'No, Ma, today I have just walked about 12 miles.' Then he went to the toilet; it was raining, and when he came back he said, 'I have an ache in my stomach.' He had a history of pains from colic. He was asked to lie down. After some time passed, he wanted to go to the Gurdwara. He was told that a *dandi* would be arranged for him and when he heard this he said, 'Why Ma? I still have the strength to lift a few people and keep on moving.' Then all of them left. I heard that he had a fever, then his wife came and strongly pleaded with me, 'Ma, come and see him, at least once. It is a Gurdwara dharmashala and there is nothing objectionable about Your going there'⁷⁴. But somehow I did not have the *Kheyal* and said, 'No, I do not have the *Kheyal* to go.' She left feeling sad. Most of the time they used to stay close to me, so everyone was asking me to go and see him, but I just did not have the *Kheyal* at all. Nirmalbabu's wife told him, 'I pleaded with Ma to come and see you at least once, but She just will not come.' Nirmalbabu replied, 'Why do you worry? Ma will come at the right time.' The next day I went for a walk with a Punjabi girl. On returning, while on the doorsteps of the dharmashala it occurred to me that if someone said it *even once*, then I would go and see Nirmalbabu. After visiting Nirmalbabu, Bholanath returned and said to me, 'Come along at least once and see him in this serious condition.' On hearing his words I at once set out. On the way I asked Bholanath, 'What are the doctors saying?' He said, 'Doctors say that as of right now it is not that serious and nothing will happen in the next few days.' But as soon as he fell ill, I had told Jyotish that all arrangements must be made for his proper treatment. So today I said that so as to not have any regret later on, they should bring in the civil surgeon to treat him. This was arranged accordingly.

"When we got there Nirmalbabu touched my feet with his hands as he lay on his bed. Then he said a word or two. Some sacred words also were pronounced in his utterances. Meanwhile, the civil surgeon came. The place was crowded and seeing him in his last stage, Bholanath became worried thinking that by seeing such things this body might react." Then Ma looked at me and said,

⁷⁴ Ma usually did not enter buildings or rooms of householders

"You all have seen how Bholanath was always worried that nobody knew in what way this body would react. There would be no weeping and so forth, but he knew it would not take but a moment for Me to leave the body. So getting scared, holding My hand and tugging on it, he said, 'Let us go.' I stood up in a stable manner and looked at the patient to see that his glance was turned upward and as I do not do anything of My own will, at that time my hand touched his *Brahmatalu*⁷⁵ and then we left the room. His *prana* (vital breath) left his body at that very moment. It seems the civil surgeon had given him an injection in the condition he was in. Nirmalbabu had always insisted, 'When the moment of my last breath comes near, not even at that time should anyone give me any injection.' But at that time no one remembered his wish." She further said, "Look, many people say, 'Ma, in my last moments please be with me.' Nirmalbabu being an introvert, also expressed this wish outwardly joking, but from within he desired the same thing. He used to say, 'Ma, please be present in my last moments.' No one could understand what he meant and thought he was joking. But it was his own heart's yearning which nobody could understand. I also do not do anything by My will; whatever has to happen, always happens."

After some more conversation, gradually everyone left. At around 10 p.m. Ma went to bed.

3 September 1938 Saturday

Ma got up at 8 a.m. She was served rice and vegetable soup. After the meal I was talking to Ma and during the conversation I said, "Ma, in Ramna Ashram, where Jyotishdada installed Your foot prints on the platform at the place of the *Samadhi* (grave, tomb)...." Listening to this She immediately said, "On the platform of a *samadhi*? From whom did you hear this?" I said, "I keep hearing from many people that it is a *samadhi*. I do not remember from whom I heard this." Ma did not say anything. It is true that in spite of asking about this so many times, I have not come to know anything about it till today. As to whose *samadhi* it is exactly or whether it is a *samadhi* or not, I have not been able to elicit a reply from Ma till now.

Again the question came up about Ma having previously used the floor as a plate to eat Her food. Later on, when we fed Her we would clean a small portion of the floor for some days, but before that time when Ma ate with Her own hands, for some time She ate Her food off the floor, using it as a plate. In those days She never even cleaned the floor, no matter if it was a mud floor or a plastered floor. Many times it was laden with dust from people's feet and strands of hair and all sorts of twigs and sticks would be strewn around. And whatever little rice and other food particles She would eat, everything She would place on the floor. So it was in just this way that many days

⁷⁵ Cerebral cortex (crown of the head)

passed. The dirt, dust, strands of hair and all She took in with Her food. Her *bhava* was such that She was not even capable of cleaning the floor off of which She ate.

On page 183 of Volume One (Gurupriya Didi's Diaries, original in Bengali) it has been written that Ma used to say, "A few cubits above me in space I saw two *mahapurushas*⁷⁶ sitting, one was the Guru and the other the disciple; the disciple was standing." Referring to this, Ma said, "The *mahapurusha* was sitting and the other, his disciple, was standing."

On page 175 of the same Volume it was written, "After Her meals, Ma went down to the bottom of the hill to visit Jyotishdada's home." On discussing this with Ma She said, "It was not like that. After visiting '*Ashtabhuj*' and other places nearby I went down the hill to Jyotish's residence. Before going I said, 'Today I will have *khichuri*.' Before eating I had gone to Jyotish's place. A snake bit me on my right foot and Jyotish applied medicine to the left foot."

Here again I would like to mention that on page 188 of Volume One there has been a great error in one story. It was, "While climbing the *Kamakhya* hill at first Ma climbed very fast but after going some distance, She could not climb any more due to breathing problems. We somehow carried Her to the top."

This narration is completely wrong. The incident occurred as follows: Ma was climbing at a fast pace, and suddenly with a change in Her breathing, She gave up Her bodily movements; Her body became limp and assumed a terrifying change of *bhava*. Another important fact is that we who were with Her were also completely out of breath --- to the extent that it was becoming impossible to climb any more. The second we saw the change in Ma's *bhava* we got so engrossed in attending to Her that we did not know where and how our extreme fatigue disappeared. We were able to easily carry Ma's body for the rest of the way. Who can say if Ma's change of *bhava* had been for the removal of our fatigue?

Another incident: on page 198 there is mention of Durga Puja in our house at Tikatuli. In the context of that puja, the ritual of a sacrifice has been mentioned. Today the topic came up during our conversation. While talking to Ma I recollected an incident which has not been written about, but it is very pleasing. It was like this: when the ritual of sacrificing the goat met with obstacles, considering this to be a bad omen, the ladies of the house became worried. At that moment Ma said to Nandu, "Get some fresh unripe coconuts now, immediately." They were brought in. Then Ma said, "Let one of these unripe coconuts be sacrificed now and with the water left on the top side of the coconut the rituals of offering the blood of the goat will be performed." Shree Suren Mukhopadhyay carried out the coconut sacrifice ritual. The surprising thing was that the coconut

⁷⁶ a saintly person, an elevated soul These page nos. probably refer to the first edition of the original Volumes.

split into two, with the halves falling over on either side. The bottom portion just rolled off. The top portion lay with its hollow side up and as a result some water was retained in that half. With that left over water the rituals associated with the sacrifice were carried out. After all this the fear among the ladies gradually vanished. All matters resumed with fun and gaiety as before. Thus we keep witnessing such diverse plays of Ma's *bhava*! Maybe it was Ma's desire that She would remove any related misgivings in our minds and that is why She had this *Kheyal* for the green coconut. There are times when if She has a *Kheyal* for something, She continues with the activities at hand in spite of all hindrances and simultaneously shows the way for overcoming obstacles.

One who is creating is also destroying. That is why Ma says, "*One who knows the way to rescue can also play the game of drowning.*"

In the evening Swamiji took Ma for a short outing. When they returned people began gathering in small groups. This morning something took place. At 8 o'clock, after preparing Ma's meal, I was calling out to Her. She was lying covered in a blanket. After a while She got up and sat down but would not move to go to freshen up. This continued and then after 9, Shashanka Brahmachari came in from Dehradun and got some jute plant leaves (tender jute plant leaves are used as a vegetable). Someone had sent those to Ma. Ma laughed out loud and said, "See, you wanted to feed me at 8, but then how could you have fed me these jute plant leaves sent for Me?" We understood that Ma was waiting all along to fulfil the desire of some devotee. There is more to the story of the jute plant leaves. Some time back while we were strolling on the streets of Mussourie, Ma said to me, "Can you get some jute plant leaves?" but there was no chance of finding them there, so we laughed it off. Then again in the meantime we happened to go to Dehradun a few days ago and the day we got back, there was one gentleman (Shree Yatish Chandra, Ma calls him "Karmayogi") who, while talking in the Ashram, mentioned that he had planted some jute plants in his garden. When Shree Manmathababu heard this, he said, "Send some for Ma!" Then Ma laughed and said to me, "Khukuni, was I not talking of jute plant leaves just the other day?" Then I remembered the conversation.

This evening there was another story about the jute plant leaves. One lady came and said, "Ma, Swamiji's (one Swamiji stays here and he has met Ma a few times) devotee has come here from Calcutta and he has lemons, *chalta*⁷⁷ and other such things. Swamiji said, 'Tell Ma whatever She will eat out of these things will be sent to Her.'" Listening to this Ma said, "Whatever Baba sends for his daughter I shall eat, but before that do one thing, send some jute plant leaves for Baba." So, jute plant leaves were sent. On receiving them, Swamiji was delighted and said, "For the

⁷⁷ a sour vegetable used for making chutney

past few days I have been asking if jute plant leaves were available here." Immediately he sent lemons, *chalta* and other items for Ma through one of his helpers. While returning the lady told Swamiji, "Baba, you were talking about jute plant leaves and it seems that, knowing your mind, Ma has sent these to you."

Also today everyone left after the evening kirtan and prayers.

4 September 1938 Sunday

This morning kirtan started before Ma got up. It was decided that kirtan would continue from 6 to 10 a.m. It continued till about midday. Then everyone sat around with Ma. Now people often garland Ma and offer flowers at Her feet. We were talking about this and how nowadays Ma does not say anything to such offerings. But initially, let alone garlanding Her, even if someone offered flowers and *bilva* leaves⁷⁸ to Her body, She would become limp and drop to the floor. There would be an alarming change in Her *bhava*. As if She were a statue, She would keep lying in that condition. During festivals when Bholanath used to do Ma's puja, Her body was covered with water, flowers, *bilva* leaves and so on, and under this heap of offerings, She would be lying like a stone statue, quiet and motionless. Hours would pass like this. Then we used to literally carry Her, give Her a change of clothes and put Her to bed. Before that She would not let anyone offer even a flower to Her. She would say, "These things are not to be offered to a human being; give them to God." Subsequently She would not resist the offering of flowers, *bilva* leaves, etc, but on receiving these offerings on Her body, She went into a trance-like state. It would take us some time to get Her back to normal.

During a discussion Ma said, "Why do people converse and deliberate on pious topics? They do *alochana* (discussion) in order to become *a-lochana* (viewless). While there is *drishti* (sight, glance, view) there is *srishti* (creation)⁷⁹."

She said another thing, "The responsibility of opening the door of the underground shrine of your Kali was with Yogesh Bandyopadhyay. From that time the account of the donations was with him; now the ritual of opening and closing the door has been stopped, but just as before the accounts are with Yogeshbabu. In his absence it can be with his son or the sons of Surenbabu (Banerjee)."

Other than this there is nothing more to note today.

⁷⁸ wood apple leaves, offered in puja to Shiva and Devi and also to some other deities.

⁷⁹ The twin *drishti-srishti* refers to a famous doctrine of the Vedanta philosophy which holds that illusory perception projected by *Maya* is the cause behind the creation of the phenomenon thus perceived.

5 September 1938 Monday

Ma got up this morning but She did not have rice or *roti (chapati)*. For a few days She is being given milk and sago or boiled vegetables. Today also She had the same. At midday I read out a few letters to Her. She replied in a few words as required. Then She said, "Let us go for an outing and then we shall come back and take a rest." We went to visit "Camel Back" in rickshaws. Babydidi had not yet seen that place. We left around 1:30 p.m. and immediately it began to pour down. Somehow we managed to leave. We returned at around 4 p.m. and Ma lay down for a rest. She got up before dusk. As usual there was kirtan at that time. At 10 p.m. the lights of Ma's room were turned off. Babydidi and I slept in Ma's room on our blankets.

6 September 1938 Tuesday

As She has been doing each day, Ma got up in the afternoon and sat down. Many people desiring Her *darshan* have come. An engineer from Lucknow (he belongs to U.P.) with his wife has arrived after hearing about Ma from Maharatan and Shiv Prasad at Allahabad and having looked for Her at many places. A Sardarji from the Sikh community has come for an audience with Ma. Many more men and women, Bengalis and Punjabis, have come. The Sardarji of the Sikh community said, "Ma, we have come to You and have been in pious company, why should we be beggars now?" In reply Ma said, "If you can truly have His company then no such question remains. But do you actually avail yourself of pious company?" The engineer said, "Then do You mean to say nothing is obtained?" Ma said, "I would not say nothing is obtained. Suppose there is blazing sun, if you go and stand in the shade of a tree, the tree by its very nature will give shade, so you are sure to receive its shade. As long as you stand under it, the influence of the tree will act upon you. There is no doubt about it. But if you stand in the shade for some time and go out in the sun and play around then fatigue is bound to set in."

The engineer said, "Ma, everyone says in *kaliyug* the only way out is the 'Name'. But I have observed that in many places many people do this for years on end with no noticeable change being seen. What is the reason for this? I think there is a special method of doing the 'Name' and if one does it according to that, then there are results, otherwise nothing happens." Ma said, "See, the name and the bearer of the name are the same, now if I call out your name you would present yourself here. Hence there is no doubt that the 'Name' serves the purpose. But sometimes you can see that some children keep studying but nothing sinks into their brains --it is something like that. You see, it is possible that the person in question has attained (to a certain level). Again, those who simply remember the 'Name' go to a level of purity by repeating the 'Name' only, otherwise it might

have been much worse." The engineer was satisfied with Ma's words and said, "Yes, Ma, this is true."

Again during the conversation the Sardarji said, "Ma, do *jivanmuktas* (those who have attained liberation during life) dream?" Ma laughed and said, "For the ones who are eternally awake how can there be dream? And if you talk of dream, then all that you see is nothing but a dream." The Sardarji agreed, nodding his head, saying, "Yes, Ma, yes." He asked again, "But Ma, can *jivanmuktas* be affected by disease?" Ma replied, "For one who is freed from the idea of creature-hood, can there be any question of his being affected?" Again Ma said, "Look, while in Dehradun I had malaria fever and while I was shivering, a *sannyasi* arrived. He came to me and said, 'Ma, You have been suffering from sickness for so long, I will get You some medicine.' I laughed and said, 'Baba, the Vedanta speaks of equanimity in behaviour and vision. You are a *sannyasi* and a believer in the Vedanta, why do you see the disease as separate? Father, I am not turning you away so why should I turn the disease away? All will do their deeds as per their nature and if the disease has to take away this body what is the harm? It is all a manifestation of the same *ananda*. I have not invited anyone to come nor am I turning anyone away, because whom should I turn away? There is no second. And see, Baba, just by taking *sannyasa* and adorning oneself with robes, strutting and roaming around in a fit body is not the objective of *sannyasa* nor is it the main principle of your Vedanta. *Being established in the state of equanimity and residing in one's own Self, that is, realizing one's own Self-- that is truly the objective*. So why blame the disease? If there is a concept of friend and foe then what would happen to true knowledge?" Saying this Ma started laughing sweetly. The engineer and the Sardarji were quite satisfied with Her reply. They said, "Ma, this is a wonderful *bhava*. Such a *bhava* is not usually seen." While this conversation was going on, the sun set. A girl who sings very well sang a song and then kirtan followed. At around 10 p.m. one by one everyone left.

7 September 1938 Wednesday

We had planned to go on an outing today with Ma but then Sardarji arrived with another Sikh sadhu. We met them and sat around with them and Ma in the room. The sadhu said, "Ma, this associate of mine said to me, there is a *Bibi*⁸⁰ (meaning sister, I notice that these people refer to others as brother and sister and not as Mataji, etc.) here and She is worth visiting. Yesterday I was very happy visiting Her, so do come with me to visit Her today.' Therefore I have come to have Your *darshan* today." The new monk who could speak in Hindi began talking. During the

⁸⁰ *Bibi* (biwi): a word of Arabic origin meaning a lady, a married woman or wife. It is also a respectful address like "Madam." Among some people, it also stands for "sister."

conversation he asked Ma, "Whom do You meditate on?" Ma laughed and replied, "By looking at me, Baba, can you not make out anything in this regard?" He said, "No, in such a short time I am not able to make out anything." Ma laughed and said, "If you talk of meditation, I meditate on my Self." As for the Guru, Ma said, "First my mother and father were the two Gurus, then they handed me over to the husband, saying 'He is now Your Guru', so I took him as my Guru⁸¹. Then it is all of you, even animals, birds, insects, flies -- all are my Gurus. For there is only One who is the Guru and I see that One in everything. Therefore, if you talk of Guru, verily, He is my Guru. Again *I am my own Guru*. And again there is nothing like Guru. Whatever you say, so it is." Saying this She started laughing. Then the monk said, "Whom do you believe in- Krishna, Ram or Devi?" Ma smiled and said, "It is One Ram, One Krishna, One Devi, they are all but the 'One' with different names and attributes. There is nothing beyond the One." Then the monk asked, "Is it Dasharatha's son Ram or Nanda's son Krishna?" Immediately Ma interrupted and said, "I do not know Dasharatha's son Ram or Nanda's son Krishna. But I know only the One Ram and only the One Krishna." The monk looked at Ma with joy and awe and continued the dialogue. Again after some time he said, "All right, but do tell me what is Your relation with *panchabhuta*⁸²?" Ma laughed and said, "Now I myself am asking Pitaji, tell me what my relation is with *panchabhuta*." The monk said, "What is this? I have come to take something, I am a beggar and You are asking the beggar to give You something? If a beggar goes to a house begging for alms, the householders give whatever they have and do not ask the beggar for something, so why are You doing the opposite?" Ma smiled and said, "Baba, all I know is that we are from the same household, so who will give alms and who is there to take alms? I am your daughter, please do not say such things to me." The monk said, "Ma, a tree laden with fruits bends down under the weight of the fruits. No matter how hard one tries to prop it up with sticks it tends to bend downwards. And the tree which is hollow from inside stands erect like bamboo shoots." Such conversation went on for some time. The monk said, "I am overjoyed." Listening to Ma he commented, "These are words from the Vedanta." When he heard from me that Ma was uneducated, that nobody has seen Her doing *sadhan-bhajan* and that She does not have a Guru in the conventional sense, the monk was surprised. Again while discussing with Ma he said, "Ma, but the Guru is a requirement." Quoting a few examples he said, "Nothing can be achieved without the Guru." Ma said, "Pitaji, what you say is absolutely correct. But somehow everything has happened to this body and as I said, if you talk of Guru, they are five:

⁸¹ She is referring to Bholanath

⁸² The five basic elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether of which the material world is made.

father, mother, husband, you all and the One, these are my five Gurus." Saying this She started laughing like a child. After talking for some more time the monk said, "All right, You were going for an outing and I have come and disturbed You. Now I shall take leave." Saying so he did obeisance with folded hands and as he was about to leave Ma too folded Her hands and said, "Do disturb Me like this sometimes. You have given us so much joy by talking on such nice topics. And see Baba, only if someone is an outsider he says, 'I troubled you, annoyed you', but when people from the same household talk to each other - does such a question arise? We are, father, only the people of the same household." Saying so, again She started laughing. The two monks said, "Okay," in support of Ma's observation and then took leave.

Then we took Ma for an outing on the Uttarkashi road for about a mile and a half and returned before dusk. Kirtan was done. Associate Judge Yogendrababu's wife, the mother of Krishnababu (a veterinary doctor in the Rajputana area), the wife and daughter of Ashubabu (formerly a school principal in Kashmir, now retired), the daughter of Baradababu from Dhaka and a few Bengali gentlemen from this locality come with their families to visit Ma almost every day. It is already getting chilly here.

8 September 1938 Thursday

Today at noon we asked everyone to leave the room, as Ma is not keeping well; we made Her lie down for some rest. The new monk who had come yesterday came again at midday and kept waiting. He brought some other people with him.

Ma got up in the afternoon, A few people had come and there was some conversation. I took Ma to Her room to give Her some refreshments. One lady had cooked and brought some food for Ma. Smiling, Ma put Her right hand under my nose and said, "Khukuni, what does this smell like?" Right then I could detect a nice scent of *atar*⁸³ from the hand and then everyone there took turns smelling what was in Ma's hand. Some said it smelled of sandalwood, some said it smelled like incense, some said it was perfume and so everyone detected a nice fragrance. There was nothing of this sort on the left hand. And then, after a few hours there was no smell on the right hand. Getting such scents is nothing new. How many times has Ma's body given off such unusually charming fragrances! Time passed talking in this way and then Ma lay down around 12:30.

9 September 1938 Friday

Today is the full moon day and so everyone joined in holding kirtan from sunrise to sunset.

⁸³ *atar* (or *itr*) is an especially delightful and precious oriental perfume

A local gentleman had arranged all preparations for the *bhog* and all partook of the *prasad* in the evening.

At midday there was a nice fragrance coming from Ma's left hand, and nothing from the right hand. Ma said that She would not have much to eat today. Earlier this morning Ma and I went for an outing in a rickshaw on the Uttarkashi road for a mile and a half. Since She would not eat, I thought we would have some *khichuri* (one pot meal of rice, vegetables and pulses). I put a pot of *dal* (pulses) on the stove and then left with Ma. When we came back, I found that the *dal* had burned quite a bit at the bottom of the pot. Ma saw this and said, "Today I will have only this *dal*." Since She is not well a lot of care is taken in serving Her a proper diet. But She insisted that today She would have only the burnt *dal* and said, "Things give curses if wasted; why waste food?" To our surprise She had a few morsels of rice with the burned *dal* and did not allow us to prepare anything else. Two ladies took the leftovers on Her plate as *prasad* and said, "It tastes like nectar, there is no burnt taste at all!" But while feeding Ma they kept saying, "Didi, please do not give this burned *dal* to Ma." They also kept advising Ma, "Do not have this, Ma." While eating Ma smiled and said, "OK, I will give you all a little of this to eat." Saying so She gave them a few handfuls and then they kept asking for more until all of the *prasad* was finished. Everyone had a good laugh about this. After this everyone left.

Ma, Babydidi and I were sitting together. The day before Babydidi and her party came to Dehradun, there was mention of this: while Ma was having Her food, She said that someone would have an unnatural death, but at that time She would be there -- that it was Her *Kheyal* that the unnatural death would not be allowed to happen. And that is what took place. Outwardly what seemed like an unnatural death was actually not that. After this conversation, one day while travelling in a rickshaw, Ma had said to Babydidi that Sukumar (Babydidi's eldest son, who had died in a motor accident last *Vaishakh*-- Hindu month of April/May) was the person for whom Ma had such a *Kheyal*. He had been appointed an Additional Judge in C.P.⁸⁴. She did not give out many details then. Ma generally does not fully disclose any important or special incident, but many times while talking we can learn about these things more clearly, if only by gathering details here and there. Ma says, "So many events take place but the *Kheyal* for talking about them does not always arise, so things remain untold, and whatever you can extract during conversation, only that much comes out." She had divulged a little bit to me while eating what had happened with Sukumar and then She had told Babydidi something more while on the rickshaw, but nothing was very clear. Today to some extent, the incident became clearer.

⁸⁴ Central Province, now called Madhya Pradesh

Ma said, "Look, Sukumar had not visited me much. In all, it must have been around four times that he visited. Initially Baby would bring him along to Shahbag when he was a child. He had some problems with his eyes that is why she brought him to Me. All is not said every time, but that day I said, 'Collect dewdrops with a clean piece of cloth and apply the collected water to his eyes two or three times a day.' After that his eyes were cured. The next time she brought him to Siddheshwari, I was unwell then and he was going abroad. Baby said to me, 'Ma, please bless him with Your hand on his head.' I replied that since I did not do such things for anybody, it would suffice if she did it. Since Baby kept insisting I took Baby's hand and put it on his head." After this, Babydidi intervened: "At that moment something happened. As Ma put my hand on his head, my hand slipped off and Ma's hand remained on his head." Then Ma resumed the story: "The third time we met in Calcutta. On Baby's insistence he offered a handful of flowers at My feet. The fourth time we met again in Calcutta and it transpired that Baby had taken Me as her daughter and named Me Gauri, so I said, "What should I address you (Sukumar) as?" Baby said, 'You are younger and since You have been my daughter only for the last three years, he is the elder.' Then I laughed and said, 'OK, my *Chhoto Dada*'⁸⁵ Talking like this we had fun. After that I did not meet him at all. But as many times as we met there was some special incident. Whatever has happened is all that I am telling you. What shall I do if things keep happening?" Saying this She went on, "As soon as Sukumar was hurt in the accident, in his last moments this body (showing Herself) presented itself there. The moment he saw Me he recalled that long back I had called him *Chhorda*, as well as the other things that had taken place between him and this body and I had the *Kheyal* that this unnatural death would not be allowed. Then listen further; he turned back and looked at Me and at that moment he forgot about his injury and the present state he was in so there was also a change in his state."⁸⁶ Then looking at this body, he breathed his last. That is why it was not an unnatural death. All this that I am telling you was not done by Me wilfully: *you all create your own destiny by your karma*. It was destined that he would be injured because of his karma, and again it was destined that by remembering the call *Chhorda* etc. the subsequent results would occur, so all this happened. Santosh also met with an unnatural death, but because of the holiness of the place, there were no negative results of an unnatural death, and his last rites were also conducted peacefully."⁸⁷ Being overjoyed Babydidi said, "Ma, that You have so much *kripa*, I myself understand very well. I keep telling everyone, how can anybody bear the agony of losing one's son with a smile and calmness? It

⁸⁵ *Chhoto*- small or younger; *dada*- elder brother. *Chhoto Dada* and *Chhorda* mean the same. Ma uses both these names for Babydidi's son.

⁸⁶ The state of a person dying an unnatural death.

⁸⁷ Santosh, a boy suffering from epileptic fits was once at Puri in Ma's company. Roaming alone, one day he fell into a well and was found dead.

seemed that whenever I wanted to plunge into fire somebody calmed me down and pulled me back. Ma, I have wept a lot on losing my husband but during Khoka's loss I did not feel so and I know it was Your *kripa*. But today I have understood clearly why I could endure the grief of losing my son with such tranquillity. Again, look Ma, on Your saying all this, I can recollect many more incidents. Just after Khoka's death I had a bath and went to the puja room and did puja for a few hours with calm and composure. Everybody was surprised including myself for within there was not any agitating agony, and calmness prevailed. Ma, the person who had Your blessings, one who breathed his last looking at You and at whose moment of death You stood by his side, he cannot be an ordinary being. And look Ma, the death occurred in unnatural circumstances but nobody even felt anything about it and his last rites were completed peacefully in the prescribed way by Bengali pundits and no one raised any question about it⁸⁸. How could this be possible? Today I understand that his was not an unnatural death and so the question never came up." I said, "Where, in what way and to whom Ma is doing *kripa*, who can tell? People say that if one keeps visiting Ma, he will get all Her blessings, but Sukumar did not do much of this --- he visited Ma only four times. Who can tell who will forge a link with Ma due to his/her karma?"

At night Ma sang as She was lying down:

O my mind, let us go to the riverbanks of the washerman

*There, on the banks of Nitai-gunj⁸⁹, the washerman Chaita⁹⁰ is working
at his brick stove⁹¹*

O my foolish mind!

There on the banks, five kinds of detergent⁹² are nicely arranged

But if his brick stove is set ablaze at the time of the low tide⁹³

What then would be the result?⁹⁴

The (dirty) garment of the mind proclaims that all the Vedas

have become smeared with oil⁹⁵

If clothes are thrashed about violently, they get torn⁹⁶

O my mind, let us go to the riverbanks of the washerman!

⁸⁸ There are special rites prescribed in Hindu scriptures for a person having met with an unnatural death

⁸⁹ Nitai-gunj: marketplace of Nitai, i.e. the holy company of Shree Nityananda Mahaprabhu

⁹⁰ Washerman Chaita: Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, who cleanses people's minds of their impurities.

⁹¹ igniting devotion in people's minds

⁹² five modes of *sadhan-bhajan*; e.g., meditation, japa, kirtan, satsang and reading of holy scriptures.

⁹³ at the tail end of one's life

⁹⁴ would there be salvation?

⁹⁵ the scriptures have become ineffective, being shrouded in mystery.

⁹⁶ If people are roughly and harshly dealt with in cleansing them of impurities, they may break down.

10 September 1938 Saturday

At around sunset the same two Punjabi Sikh monks came accompanied by three other Punjabi Sikh monks. One of the monks mentioned before said, "We have come to You to get the real thing. You are replete with it." Ma said, "A child should not be spoken to in this manner." One of them showed an arrow-like iron object to Ma and said, "With this one can protect one's body outwardly. For the human body is the only means by which God can be realized. I am able to see You because of this body, is it not so? Now we have come to You in order to obtain the weapon for the destruction of the six foes⁹⁷." Ma said, "Pitaji, you already have the weaponry and that is why you have come to me in these forms for giving me your *darshan*." Saying such things She expressed joyousness. The monk said, "Ma, You are the only light and we are the moths and that is why we have come to You today. The light never goes to the moths. The moths come to the light, and again there is fire everywhere but the fire inside a stove has a special capacity, and so much more is done by that fire. You say that we have everything within us but the prominence of manifestation is seen in You and that is why we have come to You. Give us the perfect bliss You have within You. You are overflowing with *ananda* and that is why so many of us come to You to obtain bliss and peace." They kept talking in such a way, with great emotion. Ma laughed and said, "Pitaji if you know nothing of that *ananda* then why are you looking for *ananda*? Surely it is there within you." Saying this Ma kept quiet, but with their repeated requests Ma began to say, "Look, having one and only one objective is the solution. To attain to that One, the only way is to have just one aim. Again, see Pitaji, we eat by taking one morsel after another, we move one step at a time, we walk by one route, we write one letter of the alphabet after another and thus we are always with One. Again we have all within ourselves, the Unmanifest, the Infinite." Saying so She explained the points to them in the same light of Her former speech. They were delighted. They conversed for a while more. All shared the joy. Then Ma said, "Pitaji, I would like to listen to you sing some *bhajans*." Since they wanted to hear Ma sing, She sung a few Bengali songs and explained them in Hindi. Then after Kamalakanta and others had sung, the Sikh monks also sang some *bhajans* for Ma. All this was delightful. A few days back a Lama also came and sang *bhajans* for Ma. The days are passing in this blissful manner. Ma told the Sikh monks, "You all have given so much happiness, you have graciously come to give us your *darshan*." They said, "We have come for Your *darshan* and it has given us immense pleasure." At about 10 p.m. everyone departed.

Today, some past occurrences were also discussed. Regarding the incident mentioned in

⁹⁷ *Shadripu*, or the six enemies, are: *kama* (lust), *krodha* (anger), *lobha* (covetousness), *moha* (attachment), *mada* (pride) and *matsarya* (envy)

Volume One about Jyotishdada having sent fish to Shahbag and Ma having already prepared the condiments for it. In that story, a special part was left out: it so happened that on that day nobody knew who had left the fish at Jyotishdada's place. A man had brought the fish and left saying he would come back, but after that, there was no sign or news from him till dusk nor did he ever return. Again in Volume One, it is written that during his illness while in Ramna, Jyotishdada had a bath as Ma had told him to do. There has been some confusion in the recounting of this story and it has been corrected in *Matri Darshan*⁹⁸.

In the Volume Two of the Diary,⁹⁹ on page 282, the story about Ma's illness has a little more mystery to it. It is as follows: one day at dusk Ma was being in a playful mood with the ladies --- as done with persons of the same age group --- when She said, "Shall I have fever? I have fever." The ladies were taken aback suddenly listening to this. Chhana, a young girl, said, "Let me see what sort of fever You have." Saying this the young girl got a thermometer and found it was true that Ma had a little fever. Then Ma said to Didima, "Give me some medicine fast or else the fever will increase. You know what the medicine is? The doctor has given Bholanath the medicines in two phials. Give me the medicine in one of the phials." Ma had a *Kheyal* that one of the phials contained only water and that is why She said so. Later on when the doctor was asked he admitted that whatever Ma had thought was correct. Anyway, Ma said to Didima, "Give Me water quickly, otherwise the fever will go up." She started behaving like a child and Didima was forced to get some water and make Her drink a little saying, "Enough! How much water do You want to drink?" Ma started laughing and jokingly said, "Well, you have given Me just a little water. Now you will see. Now the fever will stay for quite a few days." Ma did not have fever, but playfully She suddenly mentioned fever and so the fever set in. The fever started going up from the next day on.

⁹⁸ Bhajji's diary posthumously published, later translated as "*Mother as Revealed to Me*."

⁹⁹ referring to the Bengali version

CHAPTER - IV

(12 September - 11 October)

12 September 1938 Monday

As Ma directed, we came down to Dehradun at 3 this afternoon. During kirtan on the Full Moon day we had been introduced to Miss Mukherjee, the headmistress of the Girls' School. She is 23 years old and unmarried. She was accompanied by about five of her students. She is quite nice. So today as we were leaving, she came along with her students to see Ma off in the car.

On reaching we found Dasji (Gola has been so named) has come along with her mother. Once they found out we had arrived, Hariram, Hansa and a few others have come for Ma's *darshan*. For the whole night Ma did not have any inclination to lie down.

13 September 1938 Tuesday

Ma got up around 11 this morning and food was offered to Her at noon. The subject of Ma's illness in 1336¹⁰⁰ came up. One day during a Saturday kirtan when the body had become nearly limp, Ma suddenly went to the verandah and just sat down. About how She had moved, Ma said, "Do you know how it was? It was like a breeze lifting up and carrying away a piece of paper or a dry leaf."

There were many wondrous states of Ma's body that have been seen and that we continue to see. Whenever a state of deep withdrawal and "interiorisation" is seen in Her and when it intensifies, the hair on Her body and even Her hair seems to just wither away. She once pulled out some body hair and showed it to us, as if it had been stuck artificially to Her body. Once while She was sitting, the hair on Her body clung to Her clothes as if the hair had been shaved off and were stuck to the clothing. The hair on Her head used to come off as if someone had cropped it and left it there. Such phenomena can be seen after some distinct changes in Her *bhava*. At Ramna Ashram when Her hair was cut short, it used to stand on end after She had been in some unusual *bhavas*. Didima used to get scared as it is rumoured that when one's hair stands on end, that person does not survive for long. Didima repeatedly tried to smooth down Ma's hair but to no avail. Later on it would gradually settle down. When Ma had long hair, the roots would stand and become swollen. Many different states such as this happened.

The topic of Trivandram came up. There Ma saw so many idols but Her sight was fixed on

¹⁰⁰ Bengali year. 1929/1930 according to the Gregorian calendar.

the idol of Narayan in a swing reclining on a leaf of a fig tree (*vata, ficus indica*), signifying the beginning of creation. Ma changed the bedding on which Narayan lay. When this story was brought up, I laughed and said, "Ma, Your sight is always fixed on the origin, is it not so?" Hearing this Ma smiled and said, "Whatever happens, happens on its own. I do not do anything out of a personal will like you all."

Then we talked about the time in Bajitpur when, replying to the questions put by Nishibabu and Janakibabu, Ma revealed Her true identity. Ma laughed and said, "When Janakibabu said I was a devil or something like that, then it was said to him, 'Are you testing Me? Well, you can say whatever you want but I have told you the actual truth.'"

Again while talking Ma said, "Baulbabu was the first to offer flowers, *bilva* leaves at the feet of this body and garland it and as soon as he did this body went limp and fell down. Later it was seen that whether you offer flowers, water, garland or even mud or dirt, this body always remains stable, in its original state." Today we spoke more on such episodes.

Shree Haridas Mukherjee (he lives in Allahabad) has come to Dehradun for a few days in connection with some work. He is staying in the Victoria Hotel and comes to meet Ma everyday. Today he began talking about the problem that the mind cannot become still and other similar things. Ma said, "Though the head is the root, the feeling of happiness and grief comes from the heart. That is why if you concentrate on the movement of the breath from the region of the heart up to the midpoint between the eyebrows, then it works. At some point or the other the mind will have to sit still, be it at the heart or the mid-forehead. Just as a plant is watered all over but when the water reaches its roots the plant flourishes and becomes laden with leaves and fruits, in the same way if the mind seats itself in the heart it will gradually move up to the midpoint between the eyebrows and as it sits at that point it will move towards the *Sahasrara*¹⁰¹. This is its natural course. To still the mind is the aim. First try to keep it stilled and locked inside the body itself. Again, you see, this *pranavayu* (vital breath) is pulsating all the time; even though people say that its incessant motion is its nature, yet through this very constant movement of breath one has to forge one's way ahead in search of that Truth which surpasses the duality of motion and non-motion and where such questions cease to arise. Again it should be understood that in this universe whatever there is, it is the play of the *pranavayu* and if you can link your *pranavayu* with the current of the universal *pranavayu*, then and only then will that One be within your reach." Saying so, Ma began to laugh. "Who is that One? Well, it is that One and the same." Saying this She raised Her forefinger and added, "That One."

¹⁰¹ The one- thousand- petalled lotus, the seventh and highest chakra on the crown of the head, the seat of the Absolute

14 September 1938 Wednesday

Right after this morning's meal Ma had a stomach ache due to indigestion and in spite of it at 12 noon She said, "Today I will go to Haridwar." Rumadevi, Sadhan Brahmachari and I accompanied Her. She said, "If the body is well enough I shall return from the trip or else I shall inform you all and you all can come."

We left at 4 p.m. and reached Haridwar at 6 p.m. On our arrival, Ma asked us to proceed to Nankibai's dharmashala. At the dharmashala we found that Nankibai had come from Rishikesh yesterday and had planned on returning today, but once she saw Ma, she cancelled her plans. Ma has come to her dharmashala on Her own and so she felt indebted for it. One of her lady companions said, "At noon today I was thinking about Ma." Just as we had sent out word for Dr Pant, we met him at the entrance of the dharmashala; he had plans to leave for his house in Bhimtal tomorrow. Now he wanted to take Ma to the *Peet Kuti* (school cottage). As the girl's school is closed for two months because of vacation, the *Peet Kuti* is empty. Ma said, "Today we will stay here, tomorrow we shall see."

Ma's stomach ache has become serious. On the way in the train Ma began to have this acute stomach ache. I asked Ma, "Has it subsided a little?" In answer to this Ma said to me, "This pain that is happening, last night I saw its full blown appearance." I was terrified. Since we have come to Haridwar the pain has increased. The night was spent in this way.

15 September 1938 Thursday

Today the pain was even greater and Ma said, "It seems something has happened in some internal organ." The doctor examined Her and had the same diagnosis. Ma kept saying what had happened in the internal organ and it was in concurrence with the doctor's diagnosis: internally it was as if a boil had formed with pus and the pain from this has caused difficulty, even in breathing. The doctors advised Her not to move at all and not to go to Dehradun. For the past two days Ma has been bedridden. Very small quantities of fluids are being administered to Her and some swelling on the abdomen is also visible. Seeing Her in this condition the doctor commented, "If anybody else were in this situationn, it would be quite difficult." Her breathing is extremely weak. Ma said, "This sort of breathing would be dangerous for anyone else, but since this body is used to it, it is carrying on."

This evening Dr. Pant brought Ma to the *Peet Kuti*. A letter was sent to Akhandananda Swami, Kamalakanta and Sadananda asking them to come to Haridwar. Tonight the pain continues to be excruciating.

16 September 1938 Friday

Ma's condition is the same and after hearing about it Hariram has arrived. Swamiji and others have also come. I was sitting beside Ma. She said, "Last night I saw a *sannyasi* with shaven head telling this body, 'I pray for liberation'. What a voice! Even now it is ringing in my ears." Saying this She smiled mischievously and said, "What is all this? Can you all not recognize the deliriousness of the head?" I also smiled and said, "Your head is full of such delirium."

While talking Ma smiled and said, "Listen Khukuni! In Dehradun one gentleman was discussing some nice topics and suddenly he told me, 'Listen, I was talking with a prominent monk and in the course of the conversation when the topic about You came up, I could sense in him a feeling of jealousy and hostility towards You when he spoke. So by talking about You in this demeaning way he has not gained anything -- rather he has harmed himself.' He was told, 'You can see that in the normal course of action there are no actions done by this body to render service to anyone. Out of jealousy if the monk has thought about this body and has the aspiration to be better than this body, then I should say that he has been kind to use this body for his betterment. That is a cause of great happiness.'"

It turned out that what Ma had said was correct: the doctor also has determined that there is a boil in the stomach. There is a great deal of swelling even outside. Ma had seen its "full blown appearance" and at that time, She had said to the residents of the Dehradun (Kishenpur) Ashram before leaving that if She was not well She would inform them and then they should come over. That is what has happened. Ma is always right. Seeing Ma's condition everyone is frightened.

We talked about how we have seen so many plays of changing expressions and *bhavas* in Her body.

Sometimes there was *attahasa* (uproarious laughter), sometimes terrifying weeping, again sometimes we saw such a serious demeanour that we were afraid to talk to Her. And at times we saw complete childlike behaviour with Her speech, gestures and actions being absolutely childlike. Sometimes we saw a completely carefree and fearless attitude. As She is seated firmly in a grand and lofty *bhava*, totally detached, no one of this world is able by any means to shake Her off even an iota from that state. Sometimes we see a piercing look shining like a flash of lightning on Her face and then in the next moment it is all calmness personified like before. At one moment we see She is fiercer than a thunderbolt and in the next moment She is softer than a flower¹⁰² showering Her total love and affection. In Her form as the compassionate and loving Mother of the universe, our Ma has always been pouring out so much affection on us! Her affection is incomparable in this

¹⁰² A classical metaphor about superhuman characters

world. Ma says, "Whenever and whatever you require, that you get out of Me." If some people were quarrelling, Ma would be enjoying the scene, clapping and saying, "Hear, hear, the kirtan of *Shabda Brahma* (sound - *Brahma*)¹⁰³ is being sung!"

Sometimes by listening to Ma's words the intense quarrelling would stop. But it is true and many have noticed that in all these various expressions there is a serene composure that never changes.

Even though the stomach ache has subsided a little, still it remains. Dr Pant said, "I have seen many patients, but Ma is an ideal patient." He had not seen anyone with such a smiling face in such trying circumstances. The doctor said to Her, "Ma, the full blown appearance of this disease is very terrifying, please get rid of it by Your will power." When Ma decides to follow the doctor's instructions, She does it so strictly that there is no possibility for anything else. Yesterday the doctor advised Ma to keep quiet and She followed it so strictly that even the doctor could not elicit a word from Her. Everything works out faultlessly with Her.

It was around 9 p.m. and Dr Pant, Akhandanandaji, Sadhan, Kamala and I were sitting in Ma's room. Ma was talking to Dr Pant. During the conversation Ma said, "In childhood, this body used to be looked after by my parents, then for some years some yogic kriyas took place in this body. Then this body had no requirement for external food. Whatever nutrients are taken in through food for its upkeep, all of them exist in *panchabhuta* (the five basic elements of the gross world) and were absorbed into this body through those yogic kriyas and that is why food was not required. There are many aspects to this issue. Hence there was no food intake as per your view and neither was there any question of sleep and still the body remained quite fit and functional. These people (pointing to the rest of us) saw then the body lying in water, dust, mud, etc. but there was no illness." The doctor confirmed the statement. Again Ma said, "Now again, as in my childhood, I have left this body in your care, if you can keep it going it will stay, otherwise it will go." Saying this She started laughing.

17 September 1938 Saturday

All day long, Ma kept lying down with Her eyes shut. We forgot about our own food needs and panic-stricken, we began to weep. At about 8 or 9 p.m. we suddenly saw that Ma's body was overtaken by some yogic kriyas. We were all watching very intently. Dr Pant too was astounded and in awe. The yogic asanas were happening as if the body were being wrung out. Very strange kriyas

¹⁰³ *Shabda Brahma* (Sound-Brahma) refers to the Primordial Sound- OM - as a Form of Brahma; it also refers to the Vedas.

were taking place simultaneously in Her hands, legs, head and everywhere and after some time, She said smiling, "What fun! The body is behaving in a strange way and the insides are also being churned out." Looking at the doctor and smiling, in a clear voice She said, "So, why is all this happening?" The doctor said, "I do not know, I do not understand anything about it. Only You know what is happening." The doctor loves Ma, about this there is no doubt, but he does not have blind faith. He has not seen any of these things before and so he has no concept of such things. He has been abroad and does not easily come to believe in such things. But today he was astonished and said, "One whose insides were causing much pain and discomfort some moments ago even while speaking or moving slightly, who was not able to breathe properly and could not even lie down on Her side, that one is now taking deep breaths, Her whole body is being twisted and turned simultaneously but She is not even aware of the excruciating pain in Her stomach. How can such a thing be possible?" Every part of Her body was going topsy-turvy in such a manner that the doctor was dumbfounded. Ma said, "I am not aware in the least of the pain inside the stomach which has been there for the last few days." This continued for about an hour. Then we started rubbing Her hands and straightening Her fingers but Ma said smilingly, "There is no strength, I am not feeling anything." Saying this She let out an uproarious laugh and Her face seemed to be illumined with a radiance flashing out on all sides. Observing all this the doctor said, "Ma, I think all ailments have left Your body; a patient cannot have such a beautiful and radiant face. You must keep this radiant face forever." Really it was so, for Her face was glistening and Her eyes shone brightly. Ma laughed and said, "Look, in this condition while laughing or weeping the *pranavayu* may also leave the body, or there may also be recovery and relief. Everything can happen." The doctor folded his palms and prayed, "No, Ma, please do not say such things." Ma said, "All the *granthis* in this body are open, therefore these kriyas can happen."

The doctor said, "Ma, just today I was debating with Hariram. He said, 'If Ma wills She can cure Herself', and I said, 'No, last time the fever was cured by my medicine.' That time when medications were stopped after a few days, that very day some astonishing kriyas similar to these took place in Your body and the fever was cured. I thought it was due to the medications administered. But today if such a serious illness gets cured in this way, I will certainly understand that my medicine has had no effect and that all that has happened has happened due to Your will. I have a feeling that by the day after tomorrow there will be no trace of the illness."

On this Ma laughed and said, "Is it so? Well, we shall see. Since your earlier days, you have been a widower and to top it off, you are a Brahmin sitting on the banks of the river Ganges, so let us see how true your predictions are. If the disease gets cured then I would say due to Pitaji's words the disease has left. What do you say?" With all humility the doctor said, "No, Ma, please do not say

such things." Around 11 p.m., Ma was quite agile and speaking with ease. She said, "See, that *bhava* is still working within the body and so conversation is flowing."

With great care and holding Her stomach Ma would go to the lavatory. She could not walk and even with the slightest movement there would be excruciating pain. After all these occurrences at around midnight, Ma went and She did it quite comfortably. I laughed and said, "Let us see how the patient walks now." Ma laughed and said, "No, no, you all should not speak like this. The fact is that now that same *bhava* is still acting inside the body and so the *Kheyal* is not focused on what ailments are inside the body and that is why this kind of walking around is going on."

Tonight She had no inclination to lie down. Everybody paid their obeisance and went off to their respective places to sleep. I sleep in Ma's room so I switched the lights off in Her room. But since She had no inclination to lie down She kept saying a few words. For the last few days Ma's natural looks had deteriorated quite a bit, but still the doctor said, "For the type of disease She had, had it been anyone else, the appearance would have changed drastically." Sometimes Ma looks quite alright physically and sometimes Her physical condition appears terrifying. This is what we have been witnessing. As of now I see no trace of any disease in Her physical appearance.

I placed a small mirror in Ma's hand and told Her, "Ma, see for Yourself how radiant You look. By these two eyes of Yours, You take away everything from people." I put on the lights. Ma also, like a child, started looking at Her face. She laughed and said, "It is really so, there is no sign of the disease." Again She said, "You all say there is something in my eyes, but I cannot see anything." Saying this She kept smiling and kept looking at the mirror turning it on all sides. Again I said, "You do *sarvanash* (complete destruction) with Your eyes only." Ma smiled and said, "*Sarvanash*? How am I doing this? It would have been a matter of extremely good fortune if all that you call yours (the illusion of possession) were annihilated." This conversation continued late into the night. I turned off the lights. Ma also just kept lying down quietly.

18 September 1938 Sunday

Ma got up around 9 this morning. Dr Pant, Swamiji and others together went to Ma and asked Her, "Ma, how are You?" Ma replied, "Quite fine." The surprising fact was that Her entire body, Her hair included, was glowing as if someone had applied oil on Her. With folded hands the doctor said, "Ma, I want to tell You about an incident absolutely in all honesty, I did not believe in all this and yesterday I also debated the issue, but today my ego, my pride have been crushed. Last night after You had the yogic kriyas, when I went to sleep on the roof, I could clearly see that from Your room a pitch black dog, that was not really a dog, more like a monkey, came out and dived into the Ganges. Initially I thought I was having a hallucination but then I watched closely and

found that what I had seen was indeed correct. How strange! Ma had said that diseases also have their forms and I felt it was exactly that. Ma cannot be sick any more, the disease has flung itself in the river Ganges. After watching all this and in view of the terrible disease during which such kriyas took place yesterday, I am totally wonder-struck. Malaria and other similar illnesses are nothing compared to the disease You had -- this was a terrifying disease. I am astonished at how Your condition has changed into this present state of recovery."

Ma is fine, She is conversing and enjoying Herself. On hearing about Ma's illness Shiv Prasadbabu has come from Allahabad. From Dehradun, Lakshmi and Dasji (Gola) and her mother, sister and others have arrived. Hariram has also come. On arriving he found Ma hale and hearty. The doctor was telling everyone the story. He said, "The situation was such that if it were anybody else, it would have been hard to say what would have happened. Whatever notions I have had until now have been proved wrong and cleared away by Ma's *kripa*."

Yesterday when She was in a spry state, Ma asked the doctor some spontaneous questions, which came up during our conversation. Ma said, "Look, the way you all want to keep this body, I make it remain that way. In view of the state this body was in, the doctor could have thought that it was hysteria and so the questions were asked to clear his wrong notions." Today there is nothing more noteworthy.

19 September 1938 Monday

At noon while conversing Ma said, "Look, it is heard that the *munis* and *rishis* could know about everything when they sat in meditation. I have told you all in Shahbag and am repeating it again now: you know how it is with this body? I do not speak of meditation or no meditation. Is there anything other than the One? Is there anything that is separate? One can see things in meditation or things can be visualized simply by turning the glance here and there." Saying this She started laughing. *I was looking at Ma's face in awe and was thinking: with whom are we meddling?*

Then the topic of Bholanath's passing came up. I was hearing from Ma how one thing after another took place in a systematic way. At around 3 this afternoon I was with Ma in Her room. No one else was there. Ma said, "At dusk I went to his room and asked for incense sticks to be lit and Ganges water was sprinkled in every room and on every person. Then I went and sat down. Once when drops of water touched Bholanath he had said, "Is it *Gangajal* (Ganges water)?" From then on *Gangajal* was sprinkled and the same was done that day. Sitting beside him I asked that glucose water be given to him. So some people there then left to get the glucose water. Then I asked him, 'Look, do you remember your *śannyasa* mantra?' He said, 'Yes, I do remember.' During the day he had wanted to touch me. This wish to touch was like a son's wanting to touch his mother. Then I

said, 'Here is my hand; do you want to touch it?' On my saying so he stretched out his hands and grasped my hand but his hand was shivering so he then lost his grip. Then he said, 'I am going.' I immediately replied, 'What are you saying, is there any coming or going?' Then he said, 'Always You have been giving me this hope.' From this statement it was understood that all along, whatever he had heard regarding that there is no death -- all such words and *bhavas* were coming back to him and this was also a sign of pure *samskara*.

He was lying on his side and my hand passed on him from head to toe. Then after having glucose he said, 'Do I not feel cold? I do feel cold.' All his clothes were torn and used to wipe his face and body. There was a new ochre robe in the box and I asked for it. When he was covered with it, he lay on his back comfortably. Even as others did not understand, I understood that he was reciting *Pranava* and *sannyasa* mantra. Meanwhile I asked, 'You like listening to kirtan. Do you want to listen to some kirtan?' He said, 'Alright.' I called for Yogesh and asked him to sing kirtan. After some time I told him it was no longer required. As I was doing all this, no one there could understand why I was doing all this. Then as soon as the *Pranava* was uttered from his lips, my hand reached out touching his head and remained there. There was no disfigurement of the face or distortions of limbs; his legs remained folded from the knees as usual and lying in this state the *prana* left his body. In the room the *Kaviraj* and others could not make out when his *prana* had left his body. Before this I had asked for the clock to be placed on the bed below. After the vital breath left his body his folded legs straightened out a little. As some people die in a sitting posture, this was something like that. Once Bholanath had said, 'Sit me up.' But in his state of illness it was difficult so he was not lifted to a sitting posture. Had he been lifted and seated in a sitting posture he would have died in that posture. Like you all (do), I do not do anything of My will and whatever is required by you all, you get it done by this body. Look, one after another everything happened so systematically. After he died, I asked the *Kaviraj*, 'Well, has it taken place as per your opinion?' It was like talking to a wall. They kept looking at my face, dumbfounded. After some time he said, 'Yes, Ma.' Then I told them to obtain instruction on the prescribed rituals from Ramakrishna Mission." Listening to all this I was stunned and impressed. Ma can be compared only to Herself.

As per Ma's orders, Nibaranbabu has arrived from Solan. He is going to Vindhyachal to look after the *Yajñashala*. The Brahmachari in charge there, Ananga Bhattacharya, is going on a pilgrimage for a few months. On arriving Nibaranbabu said, "Ma, it is such a surprising coincidence! The day before yesterday in the morning when I put my hand in water it became almost numb. Then I was thinking, what shall I do in the extreme cold weather here? And at that moment, it occurred to me that Ma would make all arrangements so why should I worry? The next day I got a telegram saying Ma has told me to come here."

20 September 1938 Tuesday

The other day the doctor asked, "Ma, as to the figure of the disease which I saw going out, was it the natural appearance of the disease?" Ma replied, "Now nothing is surfacing (to say). When something comes I will let you know."

At 4 this afternoon when I opened the doors of Ma's room, I saw She was wide awake. I said, "Ma, have You kept Your eyes open all this time? It seems that today You have no inclination to lie with Your eyes shut." Ma said, "Yes, all these people had come again; we were conversing." I asked Her to make things clear, "With the door closed what people came to talk to You?" Ma smiled a little and said, "Just those, the figures of the disease that left the other day. Look, every disease has three different appearances related to *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. This disease also has the same. The other day Dr Pant asked, 'Ma, the figure I had seen the other day, is it the figure of the disease you had?' At that time no reply was coming forth from within." Saying this She kept quiet. And I said, "Go on." Ma did not say anything more. As the sun set, we took Ma on to the rooftop for a walk and Dr Pant also came along. Then Ma said to Dr Pant, "Pitaji, that day you asked whether the figure was of this disease or not. The fact of the matter is that every disease has three types of appearances as per its *bhāvas* of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. The one you saw, whose back was like that of a cat and the face like a monkey with long hairs on its brows, that was the appearance of the poisonous part of the disease. Today they (the three appearances) came to meet (meaning visiting) Me." I did not ask Her much. Dr Pant said, "Ma, I had also mentioned that it was something like a dog or a monkey with big claws and it leapt into the Ganges, but there was no sound of ripples, as if it were a shadow figure." Ma smiled a little as if approving of Dr Pant's statement. Following this, everyone gathered in Ma's room. The conversation went on until 10 p.m. and then the door was closed.

21 September 1938 Wednesday

Today there was some discussion about the responsibility given to Shree Yogesh Bandyopadhyay to open the doors of the Kali temple. Ma said, "Look, you know why the responsibility was given to him? The day before the Kali idol was to be moved for the first time from *Gol Ghar*¹⁰⁴ in Shahbag, I had told Yogesh, Binoy and Kulada 'Come before sunrise the next day, the Kali idol has to be moved from that room.' They all reached Shahbag from as far away as a mile and a half long before sunrise when it was still dark. The gates to the garden were not yet open and they had to wait outside. Later on it was learned that while waiting outside and talking, Yogesh

¹⁰⁴ circular chamber

Banerjee had said, 'The Kali idol has to be moved. And if while lifting the Kali idol it breaks into pieces and falls down, God alone knows who will be doomed.' Then the gates to the garden were opened. They (five in all including Amulya and Kamalakanta) came in and moved the Kali idol to the other room as they were told. As it was recounted while waiting outside, Yogesh Banerjee had said, 'From the hands of whomsoever the Kali idol falls that one is doomed.' I sensed a firm belief and great conviction in what he said. You may consider that as a reward what came out of my lips: 'As long as Yogesh Banerjee lives, he shall open the door of the room of the Kali idol as needed and keep account of the cash donations.' Now the door has been sealed but it was said that the cash donations for the room will be collected and counted on a yearly basis in the presence of Yogesh Banerjee and deposited in the appropriate place. He shall do this as long as it is required and in his absence, the responsibility may be given to his son or the sons of Suren Banerjee (the Postmaster). In this context, Ma further said, "All should help carry on the pious work of the Ashram by fulfilling whatever share of duties is assigned to each of them. For by shouldering such pious responsibilities, whatever merit be reaped by each of them, will do him good. Therefore, the inmates of the Ashram should also render help joyously in carrying out spiritually beneficent work."

Today something else came up. Ma had been to this place previously with Bholanath and Jyotishdada and before leaving nearing the close of the Janmotsav celebrations (Ma's birth celebrations), She made Surendada (postmaster), Kamalakanta, Benoydada (Benoy Bandyopadhyay), Amulya Chowdhury and me offer oblations to the preserved fire of the *Yajna*. Ma said, "I could see that at some point in time these five were engaged together in spiritual activities of this kind. That is why now the karma of this *bhava* happened to be performed by the five of them." Who can determine the reason as to when, why and to whom Ma gives instructions? Some people may feel saddened or have their pride hurt thinking, "Why did Ma not give the work to me and why has She given it to another person?" Ma alone knows Her reasons for assigning certain kinds of work. Even to make a conjecture would be madness for us.

22 September 1938 Thursday

Ma's health condition continues to be the same. For the last eight days or so rice and *roti* have been completely stopped and instead She is being given milk and fruits. This has been the kind of diet recently.

23 September 1938 Friday

For two days, Shree Surendra Nath Tagore along with his daughter and son-in-law have been coming to visit Ma. Yesterday they were not able to talk much but today there was a lot of

conversation. I am writing some of it here:

Shree Surendra Nath Tagore said, "There are so many ill- conceived rules we have and we would do well to rid ourselves of them completely. By following superstitions we fall further into the abyss of ignorance, for example, the discrimination used in the caste system." Ma said, "It is not the same for everybody. For some it is their *samskara* that they have to live through all those *bhavas* in order to progress otherwise they will not be freed from the bondage of *sanskaras* and that is why they are asked to follow certain rules of society. Even though everyone has to go to the same place, an individual's path will depend on his/her particular station in life, hence the path for all is not the same. Though the objective is the same and there is nothing beyond the One." Shree Surendra Nath Tagore said, "We are also part of the One." Ma said, "Why only part of it, Baba? You are the whole. Look, if you did not have the *bhava* of the *akhanda*¹⁰⁵ then why do you crave for *akhanda* happiness and *akhanda* peace? If one does not know the taste of a thing, will he be tempted to want that? Again, look, Baba, you all are in the realm of the One only. You walk one step at a time, you write by arranging letters one by one, you eat one morsel after another." Saying this She started laughing.

Shree Surendra Nath Tagore said, "Is it necessary to have a Guru?" Ma said, "Yes, one needs some incentive for going ahead." Again he said, "How can one identify a *sadguru*?¹⁰⁶" Ma replied, "To tell you the truth, can students identify a good professor before hearing him? That is why some people say that one should stay for a year in the company of a Guru before accepting him as Guru. Even by doing so is it possible to recognize the competent Guru? But of course it is a fact that whatever is destined to be had from someone, one will get that from him. Following this law of destiny people meet each other. It could also happen that one starts repenting after accepting a Guru and that after a while, he does not like him any more. This is explained by saying that what was destined to be received has been received. Another aspect of it is like this: suppose you take a horse cart to the railway station and you board the train. On boarding the train you do not demean the horse cart as a means of having transported you from one place to another, because it is the horse cart that got you to the railway station in order to board the train. Another example is this: after you have studied in the village primary school you desire to go to a proper school and then on to college. Hence no effort goes waste. Your thirst for knowledge could not be quenched in the *Pathshala* (rural primary school) but studying there inspired you to go to a High School, hence nothing goes waste. Again it can be seen that the *sadguru* himself gives shelter to the disciple. He

¹⁰⁵ unbroken, unfragmented, infinite, whole

¹⁰⁶ True Guru, the enlightened preceptor

finds you. It is the very nature of the *jagadguru*¹⁰⁷ to have *karuna* (mercy, compassion). The Ishta, Guru and Mantra, all three, are the same, the One, that is why it is so."

We took Ma to the terrace and at sunset She came down. On 25 September, that is 8 Ashwin, Sunday, a school for girls will be established and a small house behind Kishenpur Ashram (in Dehradun) will be acquired for this purpose.¹⁰⁸ With the financial help of Shree Shiv Prasad Singh and Swami Akhandanandaji the groundwork of this project has been accomplished. The news has come that Kuladadada from Dhaka will send his two daughters to the Kanya Ashram. It was Kuladadada who first sent his son as a brahmachari (to Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Vidyapeeth, residential school for boys) and now again it is he himself who is first to send his daughters for the Kanya Ashram. To support and assist those girls who have a spiritual and religious bent of mind will be the primary mission of this Ashram.¹⁰⁹ Not much worldly education will be imparted. This coming Sunday Shree Yatish Chandra Guha is supposed to arrive with the girls. Here on the banks of the river Ganges the girls will be initiated into this new way of life.

24 September 1938 Saturday

Today there is nothing noteworthy. Yesterday Abhay, Yogeshdada, Anukul and others returned to Dehradun from Uttarkashi. Abhay and Anukul came here last night itself and Yogeshdada stays back in Kishenpur Ashram.

25 September 1938 Sunday

Shree Yatish Chandra Guha arrived today with Kuladadada's two daughters, the second one and the third one, for the Kanya Ashram.

On the occasion of their entry into the Ashram, Shree Manmathadada performed Ma's puja, *Yajna* and Kumari puja of the girls, which were followed by kirtan. The girls were given their new names, Bhaktipriya and Shantipriya.

I notice that after the yogic kriyas in Ma's body the other night there has been a special glow on Ma's face. Though the radiance is not as much as it was the day after the yogic kriyas, the glow is still quite prominent. Her food remains the same, some milk and some dried fruits. The way the disease had taken over those few days, making Ma so pale, frightened Dr Pant. But immediately after the yogic kriyas there was a surprising change. Even when Yatishdada (Yatish Chandra Guha)

¹⁰⁷ World Teacher, the Guru who transcends all sects; God Himself in the form of such a Guru.

¹⁰⁸ Shree Shree Ma Anandamayee Kanyapeeth for girls

¹⁰⁹ The Kanyapeeth was variously named in the beginning, such as "Kanya Ashram" (Ashram for girls), "Mahila Ashram" (Ashram for ladies), and so on.

came in and saw Ma, he commented, "We were terribly frightened when we read Didi's letter, but now that we see Ma it does not seem anything serious has happened." At this comment, Ma laughed and said to me, "I will make a fool of you now." She meant that I had written to everybody, "Ma has a serious illness" and now when they come and see Her, they think that nothing was serious and that Ma is fine and healthy. I laughed and said, "Okay, it is fine, let me be a fool. But at least You are cured." Today also like other days at 10 p.m. the doors of Her room were closed.

26 September 1938 Monday

After hearing about Ma's illness, Ashu (Bholanath's brother's son), arrived from Calcutta to check up on Her. Gradually many people are arriving for Ma's *darshan*. Again the Seva Sadan (nursing home) of Dr Pant is humming with activity. Because of the puja (Durga Puja) holidays, many people are able to visit.

This afternoon I was talking to Ma when She said to me, "Yesterday afternoon at around three o'clock, I was lying down; as I opened my eyes I saw it was bright and sunny all around and I kept thinking, 'Khukuni is not calling me even now for washing my face and it is so late in the day.' You and Abhay are close by at night, so I looked here and there but I saw none of you." Saying this She started laughing. I said "Ma, also in Mussourie I had given You a face wash in the morning and then at 10 o'clock when You were having Your food You complained to father, 'Khukuni has not given Me a face wash today.' It was like this that as soon as I gave You a face wash and You were in your room, You kept thinking, 'Khukuni has not yet given Me a face wash.' And then there was this naughtiness, 'I will not say anything beforehand and when she calls me to eat and puts a bite in My mouth, then I will tell her.' Listening to this Ma laughed and said, "Is all this madness or what? As in old age people eat and forget it the next moment, is it some thing like that?" I said, "Ma, You alone know about Yourself. About a year back You had told me, 'All this could happen, I am telling it to you beforehand.'" Listening to all this Ma laughed. Later on She said, "Look, you all have a measurement of time as per your calculations. Sometimes I get totally out of your timeline and so things like this happen. This does not fall under the category of amnesia or oblivion." Thus we continued to talk about similar things.

27 September 1938 Tuesday

Today devotees gathered and did the Nama kirtan close to Ma for a long time. There is nothing else noteworthy.

28 September 1938 Wednesday

Ma got up around 7 this morning, then I gave Her a face wash and some milk. Devotees then started arriving to see Ma and there was kirtan for an hour. The house is on the banks of the river Ganga. In this ambience early in the morning listening to devotees sing Nama kirtan sitting near Ma was very pleasing.

29 September 1938 Thursday

This morning a gentleman with his family from Calcutta arrived. He is from Giriji Maharaj's¹¹⁰ Ashram and hearing about Ma, they have come to visit Her. While conversing he said, "When I heard a story from Swami Asimanada (he is from Ramakrishna Mission) I had a great yearning to meet You; I shall not be able to narrate it as well as he narrated it. While we were talking, I learned that he had accompanied You for the consecration of the temple in Uttarkashi and then came back with everyone to Dehradun and further to Raipur. On the journey back there were heavy rains and the river was rushing down making it impossible to cross it in a vehicle. I heard that You got into the middle of the rushing river even though it was quickly rising, and helped everyone cross. I heard that when Swamiji saw this action of Yours, he could only compare it to one thing: as the *Karnadhara Guru*¹¹¹ You were getting everyone across the torrential stream of life and death.¹¹² He narrated this story in such a way that it seems the scene has got permanently embedded in his heart."

When we heard this we also remembered this incident. Actually it was a perilous situation. There were so many with us including children and older people and the stream was flowing so rapidly and with such strength, that it took two or three people holding one person to get him through safely. Then Ma positioned Herself tactfully at the centre of the river and gave a helping hand to those who were crossing. It was a great spectacle. It was pouring, there were flashes of lightening, and every now and then there was a roar of thunder, and in the midst of all this the *leela* was going on. At that moment many recalled the *leela* of Shree Krishna. And there were some like Swami Asimananda who recollected the metaphor of Guru the boatman.

This evening everyone was sitting around with Ma. The conversation turned to the question of the many sinners who come to Ma, but do not get any disrespect from Her and that this is why such people feel encouraged and given strength to go on. But it is also in line with ethics to bring the rogues to their knees! Ma laughed and said, "Look, so many of you have advised Me on this

¹¹⁰ The great saint Shree Shree Balananda Giriji

¹¹¹ the Boatman, the Helmsman

¹¹² *bhavanadi*: the world-river

issue, but I am not able to follow your advice, what to do? And do you know why? That the sadhus and *sannyasis* do not let such people close by and keep them at a distance, is because the vibrations of these people may harm them and this is correct. There is another category of saints who are so evolved that the company of wicked persons will not affect them, but as a lesson to common people in society they avoid them. But since for this body things have no rhyme or reason, what comes as a *Kheyal*, do you know? If sores manifest on this body does that mean the hand should be cut off? (sores on the hand). Medication is applied in an attempt to cure it. Here there is no question of trying and whatever has to happen happens. Whom shall I ask to move away? And *what* can be moved away, *where* can *they* be moved to? There is no second to the One." Saying this She started laughing and said again, "That is why I keep saying where shall I move the diseases? And who shall I move away? You all come and play with this body; similarly they also come and play. But you can say that this body gets emaciated, becomes weak, well, that has got to happen, because that is their (of people with negative vibrations) nature, those are their characteristics. Whosoever comes his characteristics show up." Listening to all this from Ma, we were stunned and in awe. What high *bhavas* Her words express! Only the One who is Omnipresent, Greatness Personified, Limitless, Beginningless, Endless and Pure can utter such words. *Again and again we forget, getting so engrossed in the mesh of Her leela, we do not remember all this. She makes us forget. Getting caught up in the whirlpool of Her leela, we keep diving and rising in the waves. What can we do?*

At dusk there was kirtan and at 10 p.m. the lights were turned off.

30 September 1938 Friday

Today is *Saptami Puja*. The devotees got together and did kirtan, puja and *Chandi Patha* (recitation of the scripture, *Shree Shree Chandi*) which all enjoyed a great deal.

1 October 1938 Saturday

Today is *Maha Ashtami*. Devotees have arranged for a *Yajna*. Yogeshdada, Nirajdada,¹¹³ Ashu, Narsingh and Dr Pant offered oblations to the *Yajna*. Kamalakanta did the Chandi Patha and Sadhan, Shashanka and the ladies did japa. The puja, *Yajna* and food offerings were all completed beautifully. Kirtan was sung following the *Yajna* and there is much joy around. Ma is being adorned with flowers and some devotees drape Her with clothes and then those clothes are immediately distributed. Today Shree Shiv Prasad Singh has come with his family. Before sunset Ma went to the terrace and sat down. Kirtan was performed there. When it was dark She came down and sat in Her

¹¹³ Justice Niraj Nath Mukerji of Allahabad.

room. All sat with Her and talks went on about various things. At 10 p.m. the doors of Ma's room were closed to allow Her some rest.

2 October 1938 Sunday

Last night at 3 a.m. Ma came out of Her room but then when She returned to Her bed She had no inclination to lie down and kept sitting. Suddenly Her body started shivering terribly. Then after some time the yogic kriyas started. She sat with Her legs folded as if in an asana and then one after another many asanas were being done. The body movements were being carried out in an astonishing manner. One by one everyone got up and came in to see this spectacular sight. Jitendrada who has come here from Allahabad had seen such *bhavas* many times before but still on seeing them once again, could only marvel at the uniqueness of these *bhavas* which are new and fresh on each occasion. Seeing this beauty everyone was enchanted. These kriyas continued for an hour and then Ma firmly sat down. It was past dawn and at 5:30 a.m. Ma was asked to lie down. Ma also replied like a child saying, "Should I lie down? Okay." Saying so She lay down.

Ma was up at about 8 in the morning. We gave Her a face wash and tried giving Her some breakfast. But we could feel that now the body was somewhat listless and with a good bit of effort we got Her to rise. The whole day it was like this: the eyelids were closing on their own as if weighed down with somnolence. Yesterday due to the intense shivering there were terrible spasms in the muscles. Such a commotion does not happen often. That is why the body has been seemingly listless. In the afternoon I was sitting with Ma with no one else there. While talking, the subject of last night's yogic kriyas came up and Ma said, "All these kriyas that you see happening keep happening on their own, just as you sometimes see a disease has been cured. You know how it is? For example before going somewhere one wears one's clothes properly. This body does not speak of anything by its will, nor does it do anything by its will; it just happens. But when this *bhava* occurs: that is the body is now going to function in this way, it prepares itself for that. Just as clothes keep fluttering in a breeze and we can watch them, in the same way one can see movements in this body, for it is also like a piece of cloth. And after the kriyas have been carried out, it is as if it has adjusted itself according to the course of its movements.

In the evening many people were sitting around with Ma. Today also before dusk Ma went to the rooftop and sat down. There all sang kirtan along with Abhay. Many people have come and time is passing in enjoying conversation and kirtan.

3 October 1938 Monday

Today is *Navami*¹¹⁴. This year *Ashtami*¹¹⁵ occurs on two days, that is why *Navami* falls on this day. It is a day of enjoyment and there is a festival-like atmosphere. Before dusk Ma took everyone along with Her to the *Brahmakund*¹¹⁶. We stayed at the *Brahmakund* for about an hour. Devotees took advantage of the opportunity of being in such an auspicious place and offered puja at Ma's feet with hibiscus flowers and Ganga water. After sunset everyone returned to Seva Sadan where kirtan was performed.

4 October 1938 Tuesday

Today is *Vijaya Dashami*¹¹⁷. Yogeshdada and I are leaving for Kheora as we are going to explore if anything can be done to commemorate the birthplace of Ma. Before beginning our journey for Kheora, we shall leave the girls of the Kanya Ashram in Dehradun. Mashima and Nishibabu have arrived from Solan as per Ma's request and they also will stay in Dehradun along with the girls. Ma and those accompanying Her will continue to stay here. Maharatan has arrived from Allahabad.

A lady who named herself the "mother of Ma" at Mussourie and her own mother (wife of Shree Ashutosh Bandyopadhyay) have arrived with their children. Ma was enjoying the play calling the old lady, "Grannie, Grannie." This "Grannie" of Ma affectionately calls Her Gopal. She adorned Ma with garlands and since it was *Vijaya Dashami* she offered *siddhi*¹¹⁸ at Ma's feet and fed Her sweets. A son of hers began singing a song about Shree Krishna being made to dance by His associates and while the song was going on, Ma then said, "Didima, please dance!" The old lady who was enjoying herself started dancing. Ma stood next to her saying, "I am standing on your left side." She garlanded her and adjusted her dress befitting the role of Krishna. The lady showed her affection to Ma and called Her Radhika. Everyone was thrilled to see this *leela*. I said, "How is it that today you became Radhika by standing on the left side?" Ma replied, "Do you know why? She adorned Me as Krishna Gopal and being taken by that *bhava* She became Gopal. Every action must be done with complete and full dedication."

Thus the rejoicing continued. Everyone got together and sat down for kirtan, which lasted

¹¹⁴ The ninth lunar date, the last day of *Navaratri*

¹¹⁵ The eighth lunar date, the acme of Durga festival Sometimes a lunar date is long enough to continue till the next morning; in such a case, the tithi is observed on two days.

¹¹⁶ The Haridwar Brahmakund at the Ganga River is one of four sites where drops of the Amrit, the elixir of immortality, accidentally spilled over while being carried by the celestial bird Garuda.

¹¹⁷ The tenth lunar date, the day of Victory. Shree Rama won the battle on this day by killing Ravana, the demon king of Lanka. Shree Rama is believed to have performed the first Durga Puja in autumn for obtaining the boon of doing away with Ravana. From the spiritual point of view, this day symbolizes the victory of good over evil, Self over ego.

¹¹⁸ *bhang*, an intoxicant offered with milk to Lord Shiva

until the middle of the day. After that, the doors to Ma's room were closed. I was sitting beside Ma and we were exchanging a few words. Shree Niraj Nath Mukhophadhyay has come to visit along with his family. Shree Shiv Prasad Singh's wife has stayed back at the Ashram so she can stay with Ma. Gradually everyone left.

The way Ma enacts Her *leela* in perfect harmony with householders, women, men, children, the old, the young, brahmacharis, *sannyasis*, in fact everyone, is unique indeed. This is possible only because Ma is Ma, for without such stupendous power it would be impossible to go on playing like this with such a mix of people. Anyone who has experienced directly what I am speaking about will most readily agree.

From the very beginning Ma's life has been of one *bhava* of equanimity expressed in different ways. Had there been the slightest defect in Ma, the play of such a *bhava* would not have been possible. That day She talked about another *bhava*. "Look, sometimes it is seen that if someone has a great attraction for this body and if there is a feeling that the body will not submit itself, then it slips away, as it were. This is also a kind of indulgence and that is why it happens like this because it is required for that particular person."¹¹⁹ I laughed and said, "And as for those who have a bit less attraction for You? You go on Your own to them and present Yourself so that You are within their reach." Ma laughed and said, "Yes, this really does happen! Maybe they are concentrating on this body."¹²⁰ But the concentration, never diminishing, is steady and focused on the objective; to those, this body goes on its own. This happens naturally." Saying this She kept smiling sweetly. Understanding the real meaning of Her words many bowed their heads in reverence.

Beneath the house the Ganga River flows on, producing sweet notes without a break. If one sits calmly while listening to these melodious sounds of the Ganga, one can sink into meditation quite effortlessly. And to top it all off, Ma, *Mahashakti*, is present here with us! Devotees are overwhelmed with joy. Only everyone is worried that Ma's body is weak.

A few of Her fingernails had been sore. This was primarily due to the spirit of service She rendered to others that characterized most of Her childhood and young adult life, even at the cost of neglecting Her body. Since my first meeting with Ma the nails were a sort of boon to me as well as the lice Ma had on Her head. Why? Under the pretext of removing the lice and applying oil to Her nails, I was able to be with Ma for long periods of time, and because of what I was doing no one could really object to my spending so much time with Her. Even when others left after Ma went to

¹¹⁹ The satisfaction one derives by being in close contact with a renowned saint may be based on egoity, self-indulgence and pride, which Ma used to shatter quite often.

¹²⁰ sometimes out of intense hostility.

bed, I could sit holding Her hand under the pretext of needing to apply oil to the nails. Then when She began keeping me far away from Her, the lice in Her hair went away and the nails also healed. Today Ma was telling this story to everyone, having a lot of fun with it. On listening to the story Abhay started singing, "Under the pretext of adorning Her, I have Her company," Everyone enjoyed hearing about this very much.

After closing the doors to Ma's room I was sitting holding Her hand when She laughed and said, "I had told Jyotish one day, 'I have kept these nails in this shape only for the sake of Khukuni. She enjoys spending time with them.'"

Listening to this I kept staring at Ma with tears in my eyes. I was thinking that even if all the love and affection of the world were put together, could it be compared to this kind of love? So many incidents have happened and each time I thought no mother in the world can give even an iota of such love to her children. This love is incomparable. And this is why so many women, men, sinners, virtuous ones, people of different religions and races are coming today to take shelter at the Lotus Feet of my Ma. In such a big zoo that is this world, my Ma is maintaining equilibrium in all directions. Everyone feels, "Ma loves me the most." And there are many people who in a fit of anger and hurt say unpleasant words to Ma, seemingly deciding never to look at Her again. But then again, for the few minutes they are in Ms's company, there is suddenly a complete U-turn in their attitude and it seems from their expression that they cannot think of being without Her for a moment.

Shree Manmathadada's son, Jyoti (Narsingh), has also come. He expressed an interesting view the other day. "We keep saying to Ma whatever we like, out of anger or hurt, without giving it a second thought, because we know very well that She will not feel offended nor would She say anything to us. Because of this we continue to say whatever we like. No one would dare speak to one's parents in such a way for fear of their disapproving reaction, but with Ma there is no fear of this kind. Nothing can change Her. Her *bhava* remains ever blissful. She is always the same Mother bestowing unconditional love on all."

Around 3 this afternoon it was time for us to be on our way. Even though I know that after a few days I will return to Ma, the idea of not having Her company made my heart weep. Keeping my feelings under wraps I did my *pranams* and took leave of Ma. She pacified me by saying, "There is no going; come back soon." The decision was made that the girls of Kanya Ashram will stay in Dehradun and that Indudidi, who has come from Mussourie, Mashima and Nishibabu will accompany them and look after them there. Ma also told me, "You, too, go to take the girls to Dehradun." So we all took the train for Dehradun at 4 p.m.

Once in Dehradun and staying in the Ashram for a few minutes to fulfill Ma's wish, we

immediately started off for the station to catch the Dehradun Express. We boarded the train at 7:30 p.m. and reached Haridwar station at 9:30. Swami Akhandanandaji, Manmathadada, Yatishdada, Sadhan and Sadananda had arrived at the station to meet us. We will be on the same train on our journey to Kheora, with Ashu staying on up to Kolkata.

5 October 1938 Wednesday

A great deal of conversation with Ashu took place while on the train. Ma had seen him as a small baby, a few months old, after She joined the family¹²¹ as a bride. He grew up with the love and care of Ma.

Here are a few of Ashu's stories:

Ashu said, "I always thought, even when there were so many people coming to Ma (he referred to Her as Ma, even though She was his paternal uncle's wife, his "*Khurima*") Her feelings for us would be different from those for others, but the more I saw of Her the more I realized that I was completely wrong. For Ma everybody is the same and there is not the slightest difference in Her attitude towards anyone. Day by day I am realizing this truth and the belief I held for so long has proved wrong. After my Uncle's¹²² death when I went to Dehradun to look up Ma, I was surprised to see Her *bhava* and I could not believe that this Ma is my aunt from childhood. When Ma was telling the stories of Uncle's death and I was observing Her demeanour, I was remembering the ways my *Kakima*¹²³ used to behave, Her way of talking in the earlier days, as if those were dreams. I can see that everyone is equal to Her and that there is no differentiation amongst people. On the other hand, we had received so much love and affection from Her, and we were unable to find any shortcomings in Her on that score. And again in such a short period of time there is so much change! Considering then and now, the difference is unimaginable! In spite of all this still we continue to receive the love and affection, but it seems of a different type. The more I think about Her, the more I am astonished." He said, "I remember something that happened at Shahbag. People had started coming to Her and one day as She was sitting on a cot, I was standing next to Her complaining, 'I do not like so many people. Outsiders keep coming day and night and create chaos. I do not like all this.' Ma did not look at me. Then She stood up and while going out said softly, 'What is this? How many more will come!' Those words are still ringing in my ears." Listening to him I said, "That is why, you see, all things were revealed to Her, like images on a screen. In spite of knowing it all She was still playing the role of a young bride to perfection. Neither your mother

¹²¹ Bholanath's

¹²² Bholanathji's

¹²³ father's younger brother's wife, the same as *Khurima*

nor you nor any of you could ever find anything lacking in Ma. If One is not the Whole, can that one go on pretending to be in such a role? It is as if She plays with everyone as per Her will." Ashu wholeheartedly agreed.

He further said, "I have seen so many times that She had gone to work in the kitchen when Her body would give way; bending sideways and staggering She would manage to reach Her bed to lie down. Sometimes She would tell me, 'Get the rice off the stove.' So I used to boil vegetables with the rice and eat it before I left for school. For these reasons I was asked to leave and go to my mother, but I did not want to leave *Khurima* and said, 'I will eat stale rice and go to school but I will not leave.' For a couple of days this happened but on the third day I saw that *Khurima* had somehow managed to cook something for me." I heard a few more stories of Ma's perfect way of doing work and whatever I heard was amazing and unparalleled. But like everyone else, the same was for Ashu. Having seen something particular in Ma's behaviour and then misconstruing it due to his own lack of understanding, Ashu would tell Her so many things driven by anger, grief and hurt. He was sure he did not want to see Her again. But after some quiet moments with Ma, the realization would come to him thus changing his view. He told me, "Nobody has the power to understand Ma. It is surprising that some relatives think of Her as a relative and say many unpleasant words to Her. I laugh in my mind and think, 'None of us have recognized Ma'." Talking of Ma in this strain, we passed our time in joy.

6 October 1938 Thursday

It is looking like on 11 October Ma will leave Haridwar for Allahabad. She will spend a few days there. Then She will take Her train on 15 October and arrive in Calcutta the next day.

Early this morning we reached Calcutta. Smt. Sangya Devi had received word of our coming so she met us at the station. Ma's devotee, Prem Gopal, the Maulana Saheb, is also accompanying us further on. Thanks to Sangyadidi and her thoughtfulness, our travel fatigue was removed and within thirty minutes we were at the Sealdah Station and on the Chattagram Mail. By sunset we were at Chandpur and by about 2:30 a.m. we had reached Kasba. This is the place where Ma's paternal grandmother had come to pray for a grandson and instead mistakenly prayed for a granddaughter. This famous Kali temple is close to the station. All these stories touched our hearts. From where we were, we offered *pranams* to Goddess Kali at the temple and then set out to get a boat. The village pathway was about a mile away, bathed in bright moonlight, and all four quarters seemed to be smiling in joy. It was nearly the end of the night, it was calm and quiet everywhere. Yogeshdada, Prem Gopal and I placed our baggage on a hired porter and set off for the jetty following the path shown by the porter. On reaching the rampart of the jetty we found many boats

waiting. We hired a boat and through the river channels we set off for Kheora. By this time it was around 3 a.m. The pangs of separation from Ma did set in but again thinking of going for Ma's work made us joyous. Ma's birthplace is now under the authority of the Muslims, that is why Prem Gopal has come along to give to them the proper perspective about Ma and to have a sort of special memorial in that place. He has great reverence and regards for Ma and is happy that he is able to contribute towards Ma's work. He kept telling us stories as to how many times he has seen Ma in his dreams. Prem Gopal has done his pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. His religious bent of mind is quite impressive; he wants to realize the truth, that is why he has such reverence for Ma. The Muslims of Tarapeeth and Calcutta accused him of believing in the Mataji of the Hindus, but he debated it out on religions grounds to silence them. He also took Ma to the Masjid in Calcutta. He speaks out from his heart; that is why his words appeal to all.

We reached the village in 2-3 hours. It was still dark. It is Ma's birthplace; for us every speck of dust of this place is sacred. I had come to this village on two occasions before but stayed for a short time and that is why I do not know much about this village. On the stairs on the bank of the river there was a family who had come to see off their relatives. They had lanterns in their hands. Another Muslim was fishing in the channel. He asked us where we had come from. We replied, "We have come at the behest of Ma Anandamayee." Hearing this they escorted us with care. I observed that Ma had made proper arrangements at all places. If this family had not been there with the lanterns, it would have caused us a bit of difficulty in the dark and I realized that we did not have to undergo even that. We set off towards the house of the late Lakshmi Charan Bhattacharya. He has two sons. One of them, Shree Akhil Chandra Bhattacharya, stays in the village and the second, Shree Lalit Mohan Bhattacharya, has a job in Chattagram. The same Lalitbabu used to stay in Dinabandhubabu's house in Cox's Bazaar. That was the time I got introduced to him. Ma had seen them since childhood. I heard from Ma that during Durga Puja every year the people of the house used to have Her there on Shashthi¹²⁴ with a lot of affection and She used to stay there during the three days of the puja. Dada Mahashay's (Ma's father) maternal uncle's house was in this village; it was on the outskirts.

7 October 1938 Friday

As we arrived all expressed their joy. Many among them recognized me. As soon as it was daybreak we went to the place of Ma's birth to offer our *pranam*. This time the village was inundated with water and so we had to go by boat. Prem Gopal and Yogeshdada had not seen this

¹²⁴ The sixth day of the lunar fortnight. On this day during the bright fortnight of autumn, the inaugural ceremony of Durga Puja is performed.

place. Together we prostrated and made our obeisance. Akhilbabu and his cousin brother Bamacharanbabu and 3-4 others accompanied us. After some time we returned. It transpired that Lakshmicharan Bhattacharya's widow, who had some land in her name, would donate it to us for establishing an Ashram. Last time Ma had seen this plot of land and had said, "On the side of the pond at this place, I used to play in my childhood." For us, this place too is valuable. We happily agreed to construct the Ashram at this place. Dada Mahashaya's maternal house is now in the custody of the Muslims and there would be problems in acquiring that property, so we selected this place for the Ashram, which is nearly in the centre of the village. Everyone joined happily in the work.

8 October 1938 Saturday

Today it is Kojagari Lakshmi Purnima¹²⁵ and it was decided that tonight at the nominated place all the villagers would get together and do kirtan. Last night we did "Ma Nama" kirtan. Prem Gopalbhai was so engrossed in the kirtan - he was sitting for a long time with his head bowed and today we heard that after that for the whole night he was weeping in that state. Today he said, "My heart is filled with happiness today." His house is in Delhi; only once in his life he had gone to Chattagram and then he had to board a steamer. But here in Ma's birthplace in spite of difficulties due to the soaked ground and mud, he is enjoying himself.

I am contemplating leaving for Calcutta tomorrow. Yoghesdada would stay back for the construction work of the Ashram.

From many people here I heard stories of Ma's childhood. The middle-aged ones said, "During our childhood Nirmala used to play a lot with us." With tearful eyes the elderly men recollected. "She used to call us 'Dada'. So many times we carried Her in our arms. She was beautiful, and not naughty like other children but a peaceful child; that is why everyone in the village liked Her. But we could not recognize Her worth." They said to me, "Ma, it is like we stayed awake and guarded Her for the night and now you are enjoying the benefit. We could not recognize She was such a Mother. If we could get Her once again at least, we would be at Her feet." I could get to know so many stories from these simple elders. The late Lakshmi Charan Bhattacharya's wife is such a simple lady. She said, "Bipin Bhattacharya was not well off and whenever Ma came to our house I used to keep Her here for 2-3 days, and if ever any good dish was prepared, I used to invite Her home and give Her some." I said, "If one uses fire, knowingly or

¹²⁵ Autumnal full moon night on which a special Lakshmi Puja called "Kojagari" is performed.

unknowingly, some of its qualities would affect one. You all looked after Ma and so today it has been decided to build the Ashram on your plot of land." The villagers also appreciated Her benevolence.

Many from the village took photographs of Ma from me and placed them on their altars.

Every house in the village was performing the puja of Lakshmi Devi today. After the puja everyone gathered together and did kirtan at the place selected for the Ashram. We distributed *batasa* (sugar puffs), *sandesh* (Bengali sweets made mainly of home-made cheese) etc. Ma's photograph was put on a table and decorated. We did kirtan with much joy and enthusiasm till midnight.

9 October 1938 Sunday

Since we are from Ma's entourage, many people have been coming to meet us. They are eagerly listening to the stories about Ma.

At 6 p.m. I set off from Kheora together with Shree Bama Charan Bhattacharya, who is the late Lakshmi Charan Bhattacharya's brother's son. The Maulana (Prem Gopal) stayed back to settle issues relating to the sale and purchase of the plot of land where Ma was born.

10 October 1938 Monday

I reached Calcutta in the night. I have decided that I shall start for Allahabad tomorrow. From a letter from Shree Yatish Chandra Guha I came to know that Ma had gone to Kankhal for a day and came back after visiting the Daksha temple, Shree Shree Ramakrishna Mission and Swami Mangalananda Giri Maharaj's Ashram. Ma is fine.

On reaching here I found arrangements are being made to receive Ma. Around 50-60 people are accompanying Ma. Bhramar and everybody else are working together to welcome Ma and her entourage. At Bhramar's School, that is Deshbandhu Balika Vidyalaya on Russa Road, all arrangements have been made for Ma's and the accompanying devotees' stay.

Sangyadidi made a special request to bring me to her house. She was very hospitable. In all this I could see Ma's boundless compassion.

11 October 1938 Tuesday

Today I had visited various places until 2 p.m. After that I had my meal at Nani's place¹²⁶. At

¹²⁶ Didi writes that she took *bhiksha* (alms) there; she uses this term in keeping with the mode of subsistence for *aishthika brahmacharis/brahmcharinis* (who observe special scriptural injunctions) as well as *annyasis/sannyasinis*.

8 p.m. I shall start for Allahabad by Delhi Mail. I heard an astonishing incident from Nani.
At 8 pm I boarded the train for Allahabad.

CHAPTER - V

(12 October - 16 November)

12 October 1938 Wednesday

At 10 a.m. after reaching Allahabad I found Shree Shiv Prasad Singh has started an extensive programme. Ma will come and that is why he is so rushed. In his house he has erected a huge tent. He is extremely busy and he is just unable to complete arrangements for looking after Ma to his satisfaction. I took my meal from Jitendad's house and proceeded to Shiv Prasadbabu's house. Ma will arrive this evening.

Ma came by the 5 p.m. train. Jitendada, his wife and I were waiting for Ma at Prayag Station. As the train reached Allahabad the ladies heaped garlands on Ma. They showered petals and flowers chanting "Jai Anandamayee Mai Ki Jai". Many judges and advocates of the Allahabad High Court were present at the station. Ma was taken to the residence of Shiv Prasadbabu. Many people had assembled in the tent. Everyone was dispersed quickly by Dr. Pant to permit Ma to rest.

13 October 1938 Thursday

This morning at 8 a.m. Ma was moved to another tent. Shiv Prasadbabu has got three tents pitched; one is for Ma to stay in, another where Ma would sit with everyone and the third for Swami Akhandanandaji, Dr Pant and some other devotees. A part of the house has been vacated for the rest of the devotees. Everyone sat with Ma in the tent. At about 9 a.m. Shiv Prasadbabu took Ma for an outing. They returned within an hour. In the evening he took Her to the house of Justice Bajpai. On returning from there we found that the tent was overflowing with people and a kirtan party had also arrived. The kirtan started and on the other side the eminent Rt Hon Shree Tej Bahadur Sapru, Shree Pannalal I.C.S., the Commissioner, Dr C.Y. Chintamani, Mr. Justice Bajpai, Mr. Justice Verma, Justice Mulla, Khan Bahadur Sayeed Abu Muhammad Khan, Dr N.P. Asthana, Hon Mr. P.N. Sapru, Dr L.D. Joshi, Mr. A.M. Khwaja, Dr Tara Chand, Mr. M. Lahiri, the retired Post Master General of Bengal and Assam, and other such V.I.Ps had all assembled for Ma's *darshan*. In spite of not having advertised the crowd was huge. At about 8 p.m. Ma was escorted back to Her tent which was meant for Her personal use. Still many remained there, such as the Commissioner Shree Pannalal. He spoke to Ma. She was weak and so prolonged conversation could not take place, but still She spoke a few words of wisdom. He was overjoyed. He asked "What is the way to concentrate the mind? For those who do not know anything and do not have a Guru, how do they carry out their spiritual practice? How will they understand what they need to do?" Ma

replied, "Look, just as you all educate your young children in spite of their not being willing to learn, and gradually they learn, in the same way try to educate your child-like mind. The mind is unsteady by nature and at the same time steadfastness is also its inherent nature. It wants real peace and in this material world it does not find peace anywhere – so it keeps running around. Again, even if you do not have a Guru, in the initial stages of *sadhan-bhajan*, do that which is to your liking. It is just as in the initial stages you teach small children a little of all subjects, and then gradually you can make out the subject in which the student has a special interest. Then the pupil selects that particular subject, and by pursuing the same subject he achieves success. In the same way you all should initially start studying various aspects of *sadhana* like satsang, the reading of holy scriptures, kirtan, Japa etc and by doing so you will be interested in one or two particular ways and then you will understand the path you will have to follow. Then pursue that path relentlessly and you will find whatever is required for your progress will happen automatically."

Thus continued many discussions. At 9 p.m. everybody was asked to leave and arrangements were made for Ma to rest. Ma's body is still weak and that is why such arrangements are being made. Everyone is accepting these rules very unwillingly, because Ma had always been available to them. The doors of Ma's room were never closed before; day and night everyone used to sit around Ma and there was no fatigue or tiredness. And today they are getting Ma's company less. It is only with the help of Dr Pant that these rules are being observed otherwise it would have been an uphill task to apply rules to Ma. In view of the way the devotees keep staying near Ma, the way they come with such hope and faith, it would not have otherwise been possible to have some control of things for Ma's comfort. We are getting our share of abuse for imposing constraints. Even some people are complaining against Ma. But there is no way out, we have to absorb all that with humility. Yesterday Dr Pant told Her, "Ma, please absolve me of the sin I am incurring by not allowing everyone to meet you." Ma said, "You are not doing anything with a bad intention, hence you are not guilty."

14 October 1938 Friday

Today also the commissioner, Shree Pannalal, arrived with his daughter, son-in-law and others. Last night Ma did not have any inclination to lie down and that is why this morning She was brought out of her tent a little late, that is at 9 a.m. After She had sat for some time with the crowds, She was taken to the house of Shree Shailanath Mukhopadhyay. There the ladies had made many arrangements for Ma's reception. For Ma they sang : "Blow the conch, blow the conch, singing auspicious songs of welcome! Ma has arrived at the gate."

After staying there for about half an hour She was taken by Shree Haridas Mukhopadhyay to

the doorstep of his house at Rasulabad. There his son, daughter, wife, mother and others were waiting with flowers, garlands and fruits for Her puja. After fulfilling their heartfelt desire Ma returned to Her tent. Many people were waiting there.

Everyone started conversing with Ma. While talking She said, "That you all keep doing your karma¹²⁷, it is like purchasing a return ticket - you are making arrangements to come back." Saying this She started laughing. A gentleman asked, "Ma, we keep talking of various paths, karma yoga, *bhakti* yoga and *jnana* yoga. Are these different paths or one and the same path?"

Ma replied "Look, just suppose we have to go to a temple, if we do not know anything about the temple, why should we want to go there? Again if I had not felt any devotion for the deity in the temple, I would not have gone there. At the same time you see that we are going there. That is karma. That is why knowledge, devotion and *karma* are all interwoven and are not different." Many more topics were discussed but sadly I could not get to hear all of it. Ma is scheduled to leave from here tomorrow. It is planned to take Ma to the Besant Hall this evening.

Again the Commissioner Shree Pannalal and family came and spoke to Ma in private. Many people wanted to meet Ma privately, but because of a shortage of time this was not permitted. Shree Tej Bahadur Sapru's elder son also spoke to Ma privately for 5 minutes and expressed great joy.

In the evening Ma was taken to the Besant Hall. A big crowd had assembled there and as Ma stepped through the door She was garlanded with many flowers. All rose from their seats to welcome Ma and simultaneously the kirtan started. Ma was seated on a chair; She then got up and sat with the crowd on the ground. Later on She was requested to return to the chair so that everyone could get a glimpse of Her. Shiv Prasadbabu gave a short talk about Ma. Nama kirtan followed. The crowd was huge. There was not much time left and so after an hour Ma was taken from there. The Headmistress of the Girls College had come to take Ma to the college and we went there. The girls performed Ma's puja by singing, dancing and doing *arati*. The teaching staff wanted to hear Ma's words. Ma said, "You all study so much, but you must also give time to the study of this other aspect - this is my request." When She said this with folded hands, smiling, everyone agreed to follow Ma's instructions. Seeing the glow on Ma's face, everyone was spellbound.

On returning at 7 p.m. we saw many people waiting. After some discussion, just before 8 p.m., Ma was taken to Her tent for some rest. Dr Pant himself saw to this. Then again everyone conversed and discussed issues with Ma until 9 p.m. Then gradually everyone left so that She would rest.

¹²⁷ *Sakama* karma (action prompted by selfish desires) yields its fruit enhancing the chances of rebirth.

15 October 1938 Saturday

At 9 a.m. Ma was first taken to Maharatan's house. After this, the late Gyanendranath Chakravarty's niece (sister's daughter) Sm. Pratima Devi and his nephew (brother's son) came and took Ma to Mr. Kitlee, a friend of the late Chakravarty Mahashaya. The old gentleman garlanded Ma and did *pranam*. He was overjoyed to see Her. Because of a lack of time She stayed there only a few minutes and then She was taken to a few other places before She was brought back to Her tent. Sm. Pratima Devi came along with us. She has been looking after Kitlee Saheb nowadays. She is very friendly.

As Ma returned to the tent the people waiting there congregated round Her and discussions went on until about midday.

We boarded the train for Calcutta at dusk. Many people came to the station to see Her off and among them were the Nawab of Chhatra, Captain Sir Ahmed Syed Khan, Mr. Justice Verma, Mr. Justice Bayan, Mr. Justice Mulla, Khan Bahadur Syed Abu Mohammed, Shree Pannalal, Dr. L. Joshi and others.

16 October 1938 Sunday

We reached Calcutta in the early morning. Many devotees were waiting at the station with garlands etc. As soon as Ma got down from the train the devotees shouted in chorus "Jai Ma Anandamayee" and nearly covered Her with heaps of flowers and garlands. Then we reached Deshbandhu Girls School at 130 Russa Road. As soon as the car reached the gates the kirtan, blowing of conch shells and sounds of welcome¹²⁸ announced Her arrival. Every door was decorated. Bhramar had made arrangements for Ma's stay in a room where she brought Her. These people had taken a lot of trouble to make arrangements for Ma's comfort and to serve Her. The entrance to each room was adorned with decorated earthen pitchers and plantain plants. A beautiful pandal (marquee) was put up for kirtan. Ma was taken there at dusk. It was a huge gathering. Since Ma was still weak She could not stay in this enormous crowd for long and was brought back to the room and the doors were kept closed. People were getting restless due to this and some were even getting highly agitated. But Ma could not remain in the gathering for too long. On this account we had heard a rumour before leaving Allahabad that some people were jokingly saying, "We will not go to see Ma. She would appear at 9 a.m. to sit in the 'darbar' (court) and after some time the 'chelas' (followers) would take Her back to Her tent. We do not want to go to such a 'Ma'" etc etc.

¹²⁸ 'Hulu' or 'ulu' in Bengali is a special sound of welcome and felicitation produced by Bengali women on auspicious occasions by moving the tongue inside the mouth. This practice is customary also in South India and some African and other countries.

Anyway, in spite of all this we are forced to keep Ma in Her room for most of the time. There is no alternative; what can we do?

Today the "Adhivasa" ceremony was performed. A beautiful stage is created at the centre by the people there. Everybody did kirtan going around the stage. The kirtan of the devotees of Shimla and Delhi is very nice and I had a feeling that if these people and the devotees of Bengal would do the kirtan together it would be superb. That is why this arrangement has been made. Many devotees have come from Shimla and Delhi. Many devotees have come from Dhaka, Behrampur, Jamshedpur and many other places. Tomorrow there would be Nama kirtan for the whole day and night.

17 October 1938 Monday

Today the twenty-four hours' Nama kirtan is continuing. The joy of the devotees is beyond description. Everyone has assembled together in Ma's presence. Many devotees have also travelled along with Ma. Maharatan, Jitendada's wife, Babu Shiv Prasad Singh's wife, his brother's wife, daughter and son-in-law and his sister's sons have all come along from Allahabad. Everyone is participating in the kirtan with great joy. In between Ma is being taken out and made to sit on the stage for short periods. In the afternoon *bhog* was offered. Ma was seated and kirtan and *arati* were performed to Her. It is unconditioned joy in all its aspects. Any time when Ma comes out, so many people bend down to touch Her feet that protecting Her becomes a problem. A group of young men have been guarding Ma with great difficulty. It is terrifying at times. Today in the evening Ma was partly in a state of *bhava*. She became listless as She was brought from the kirtan for a small outing. Ma had been going round, together with the devotees, in the kirtan for some time. Dr Pant is working out Ma's rest schedule. Due to this people are getting annoyed with him as they are not able to be with Ma. Even this, like all else, seems to be a great enjoyment. One day, taking Dr Pant's advice, Ma went to bed at the scheduled time like an obedient child. From the next day onwards She could not hold Herself back anymore, listening to the pleading of the devotees. Sometimes She would open the doors of Her room Herself and come out. Her body is weak but She pays no heed to it. Today Ma came out of Her room after 11 p.m; the doctor had closed the door at 10 p.m. and left. As She came out the devotees were overjoyed. All along they had been waiting outside Her door. They were getting restless as Ma was not among them. Ma also joined everyone for kirtan, happily mingling with the crowd, and at around 2 a.m. She returned to the room for rest. Dr Pant was asleep. She went to the terrace, woke him up and said, "Nothing should be done secretly; that is why I have come to inform you that I have left the room." Dr Pant did *pranam* and said, "Whatever Mataji wishes."

18 October 1938 Tuesday

Today at dawn, to bring the round-the-clock kirtan to a close, a procession went out singing kirtan in the neighborhood. After some time everyone returned to the marquee and performed the ritual of breaking the earthen pot full of curds. After everything was completed according to the Vaishnava custom, and before ending the kirtan, the ladies started singing "Ma, Ma, Ma." In one corner of the marquee the ladies, wearing garlands and sandal paste, sat down to sing the kirtan. Ma also joined them. The "Name" was sounding very sweet and melodious early in the morning. In the Nama kirtan group everyone had stayed awake the whole night. After dawn the ladies sat down again with the resolve to carry on the kirtan from dawn to dusk. The ladies of Dhaka are well practised as they do kirtan in the Ashram there every week. Many ladies have come from Dhaka. Today also at noon these ladies gave the *bhog* (food offerings) to Ma in a beautiful manner, and did *arati*. While the *bhog* ceremony was going on they sat around and sang kirtan melodiously for a long time. Bhramar read out the *stotras* of Devi from the *Chandi*¹²⁹. All the ladies recited Ma's *stotras* together. This way Ma was propitiated for nearly one and a half hours. Then the doors of Ma's room were shut to allow Her some rest. The ladies' kirtan finished in the evening.

So many people had gathered for Ma's *darshan* that it was difficult to accommodate them even in such large school premises and the huge pandal. Everyone is receiving *prasad* every day.

Today also at 10 p.m, Dr Pant shut the doors of Ma's room and went to sleep, but after that Ma came out of the room. The pandal was reverberating with melodious kirtan and the men were thinking, "Let us see how Ma remains inside with all the kirtan." Truly like a child She hurried towards the pandal saying with a smile, "I am going to listen to the kirtan" and sat amongst the devotees. Everybody was overjoyed; their aim was fulfilled. Today also Ma went to bed around 2 a.m. The body is weak, but the pure feelings in everybody's heart are keeping Her face shining brightly. There is no end to enjoyment, the days and nights are just slipping away so fast. At one point food is being made and distributed, somewhere kirtan is going on, and simultaneously there is a crowd always sitting outside Ma's room waiting for Her *darshan*. Thus all the people are enjoying themselves.

19 October 1938 Wednesday

Today at noon Ma was taken to Birla's Shiv temple so that She could have some rest. At about 4.30 p.m. we returned from there. Even when Ma stays in Her room there is some peace¹³⁰,

¹²⁹ *Shree Shree Durga Saptashati*

¹³⁰ People were more or less comforted thinking that Ma was at least in the same school complex.

but today as Ma was taken out of the school complex the people became mutinous; it became difficult for us to get Ma out of the motor car. After She got down from the car it became nearly impossible to keep the crowds at a distance. Everybody was extremely impatient to have Ma's *darshan* and obtain the dust of Her feet. At the same time since Ma was very weak she cannot be kept out of Her room for long. This is how the days are passing.

20 October 1938 Thursday

Today at 9 a.m. Ma was taken to Dakshineswar. People had not been apprised of the program, so there was less crowd. Ma was taken to the place where Shree Shree Sarada Ma used to stay. The devotees had prasada there. In that open space on the banks of the Ganga, everyone enjoyed the time in Ma's company. At about 2.30 p.m. Shree Subhash Chandra Bose and Bhramar came to Ma. Shree Shree Ma was escorted to the Panchavati¹³¹. There Shree Subhas Chandra Bose was seated. He had not seen Ma before. Shree Amulaya Kumar Dutta Gupta said, "Ma, can one realise God by serving one's country?" Ma replied, "If there is a real *bhava* of service, one can realise God by this way also." Saying this She asked Subhashbabu, "Tell me Baba, you are working for the sake of the country, why are you doing so?" In a composed way he replied, "I feel *ananda* doing so." Again Ma asked, "Well, is it a total *ananda* or partial *ananda*?" Shree Bose said, "I am not sure about that." Ma laughed and said, "Alongside this work, do that work also, Baba. Though you all can say, 'I am not doing this work for myself, it is for others' betterment,' but I would say" She paused a while and said again, "I am saying what you all are making Me say; I do not know how to read or write. But it is said that everything we do is for our own sake. All want that one whole and indivisible *ananda*. Why do they want it? We already know its savor and that is why we want it again. You all can say 'What will be achieved by doing all this?' But it is said that if one really progresses in this path, one comes to realise the Self and simply by this realisation much better service to the world is automatically done. It is just as after passing B.A. and M.A. the professors make so many ignorant people educated." Saying this She laughed and further said, "Baba, you give speeches at so many different places, please tell us something, Baba; let us hear you." Shree Subhashbabu said, "Have I come here to be heard? I have come to hear." Immediately Ma laughed and said, "Then, Baba, will you listen to what this girl says?" He said, "I will try." Ma said, "Do not keep your gaze fixed only on the outer world; spend some time also looking within; you do have that power." He asked, "What is that path?" But due to the presence of the crowd the reply to this did not emanate clearly from Ma's lips. Many a time I have seen that the words meant

¹³¹ a holy site specially suitable for *sadhana* due to the presence of five sacred trees planted together. Under these trees Thakur Shree Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to meditate.

for a person emanate clearly for that person only; the words do not come out in front of others. There was not much conversation after that. Subhashbabu also took leave after doing *pranam*. Then Ma went down to the river and had a bath. She said, "If one comes to the bank of the Ganga one must have a bath in the river." Then many others moved down to the river to have a bath. Ma asked Dr Pant also to have a bath. Then Ma sat in the 'Nat Mandir'¹³² with everyone. Shree Yatish Chandra Guha's daughter, Juthika, adorned Ma with flowers. The time, place and person, all put together, looked beautiful. One gentleman started singing songs related to Ma. Everyone was spellbound. Ma's unique appearance radiated glory. Nobody could take his or her eyes off the spectacle. Rai Bahadur Shree Surendranath Bandyopadhyay captured all this *leela* on film. At about 5 p.m. we left Dakshineswar. Arrangements were made to record Ma's words and songs. We finished the work en route to the school complex. Ma's actions cannot be predicted; suppose you start recording and Ma will just not speak. That is why Shachidada and I fervently prayed to Ma, so that we could achieve our objective. After attempts over 3 years this was finally done. After Ma was seated in the car we pleaded fervently to Her; after a lot of persuasion we reached the recording studio. Everything was completed smoothly.

On returning to the school complex we found the people were anxious on account of Ma's late return. There was a massive crowd. With great difficulty we were able to escort Ma to the marquee. Shree Brajendranath Ganguli started the kirtan. At about 10 p.m. Ma was brought back to the room. 2-3 people remained in the room and the doors were shut.

We were conversing with Ma on various subjects and on one issue Ma said, "How long do you want to stay in the dharmashala?"¹³³ Do you not want to return to your home? How beautiful! You are the home, again you are the traveller, you are the displaced, again look, you are within yourself." Saying so She started laughing.

Before the conclusion of the kirtan at about midnight, again Ma was taken to the marquee. The kirtan concluded around half an hour after midnight and She was brought back to Her room. She kept being playfully naughty till late in the night and lay down around 2 a.m.

21 October 1938 Friday

An incident has not been recorded. The day before yesterday Shree Jitendranath Thakur's disciple Shree Dhirendranath Bondyopadhyay brought his friend Kalibabu (a zamindar, estate-owner) and his wife for Ma's *darshan*. Dhirenbabu had met Ma many times before. He said, "Ma, this is a very good friend of mine and as far as I know he is very religious, and his whole family is

¹³² An enclosure or hall adjacent to a temple where musical and dramatic performances on religious themes are held.

¹³³ Inn. A metaphor for this world where we do not belong permanently.

good." Ma asked, "Where does he live?" Dhirenbabu replied, "In Baghbazar." So many people come from so many places but Ma generally does not ask so many questions, but today She asked further, "What is the number of their house?" Dhirenbabu replied, "No. 65." Immediately Ma said, "Khukuni, this 'No 65 Baghbazar' was mentioned maybe 10-12 years ago; have you noted it down somewhere?" Then I remembered that 2 or 3 times She uttered the words 'No 65 Baghbazar'. That is why, in spite of this large crowd, Ma enquired about the house number. "After such a long time No 65 Baghbazar has arrived!" Saying this Ma started laughing. Then Dhirenbabu said, "Ma, Shree Ramakrishna had gone to their house and Swami Vivekananda had stayed there for a few days."

On Ma's arrival in Calcutta, No. 130 Russa Road, Deshbandhu Girls School is overflowing with happiness; it seems that everyone is intoxicated with bliss.

As Dr Pant was making Ma stay mainly in Her room because of Her weakness, the people seeking *darshan* could not have it and were furious. Some of them called out to Ma earnestly pleading for Her to come out. After this Ma told Dr Pant, "Do not say anything to them." On Ma's orders he did not create an obstruction any more; the doors of the room were opened. Even under such circumstances all efforts were being made to give Ma as much rest as possible, but the crowds swelled day by day and there was very little scope for it. At times at about midnight Ma was made to retire and then the men would start the kirtan in the pandal thinking, "Ma has to come here". So by 1 a.m. the compassionate Ma got up and hurried to the pandal. Then the men were overjoyed; they said "Ma, we knew if we sit here and do kirtan and pray, You would come running to us ." They had achieved their objective and the kirtan went on. Thus there is great joy all around and nobody knows how the days are passing. Again, the old time devotees are not able to get enough of Ma, just as before, due to the huge crowds and knowing Ma is not well physically. They are expressing their grievances and distress. Thus in all these ways the *leela* continues. Today also Ma spent the whole night with everyone in the pandal. Everyone was elated at this. Shachibabu and others spent the night circumambulating the stage.

22 October 1938 Saturday

Today Ma will start for Dhaka. Many people have come from there. They will take Ma along with them. They had come to join in this festivity in Calcutta. In the mornings there used to be kirtan; at midday, *bhog* was offered to Ma and *arati* was performed to Her together with kirtan. Again from sunset onwards the sequence of kirtan continued. It was pure enjoyment for all. The festival continued day and night for these seven days. The *bhog* was arranged on a massive scale. Devotees from Jamshedpur, Behrampur, Dhaka and other places had come to join in the festivity.

Today it is Deepanwita¹³⁴, the puja of Ma Kali, and everyone got together and made arrangements for Ma's puja. Abanibabu from Behrampur was to perform Shree Shree Ma's puja. There were many who had been fasting and together they would offer Anjali at Ma's Lotus Feet. Bhramar made all the arrangements for the puja. After dusk the puja began. Ma was adorned with plenty of flowers. Ma lay down on Her seat. The area was cordoned off with bamboos so that the crowd might not be able to surge towards Ma. After the puja we set off for the station with Ma.

23 October 1938 Sunday

Today at around 2.30 p.m. we reached Dhaka. Many had come to Narayanganj to receive Ma. For the reception the whole Ashram was colourful with decorated earthen pitchers. Ma has come here for only two or three days. Not everyone has had this information. But whoever does get it comes running to the Ashram to meet Her. She is referred to as 'Ma of Dhaka', but the people of Dhaka get to see very little of Her. Tomorrow there will be the festival of Annakut. On this very day at Varanasi, Annakut takes place for Shree Annapurna Ma¹³⁵. Here also Shree Ma Annapurna will be offered at least 108 types of food dishes as food offerings.

24 October 1938 Monday

Today is the festival of Annakut. For the last 7-8 years this *bhog* is being offered here and so everyone is aware of the proceedings. Ten Brahmin ladies have come to prepare the food. Nearly 136 types of dishes were offered as *bhog* to Shree Annapurna Ma. Many people received the prasad. Today many people have heard the news of Ma's arrival. That is why the crowd is increasing. In the meantime Ma had a *Kheyal*. She called me and said "Khukuni you all give Me blankets to sleep on; those are made of animal fur. I feel cold and so I want to sleep on a pillow stuffed with human hair." Saying this She started laughing. "What shall I do? I feel cold. Ask them, let us see if they give Me their hair." While saying so, She pointed towards the three widows present there. I observed that they had applied oil and done up their hair fashionably with a lot of care; then I understood that this is why Ma had such a *Kheyal*. A few years back She had got Shachidada's sister's hair cropped and since then the *Kheyal* about hair is continuing. On asking the widows they readily agreed to part with some of their hair. It was a matter of joy that Ma wanted to sleep on their hair and they were happy to part with it. Seeing this the married women also volunteered to give their hair; the unmarried girls were also keen. Bhupenbabu said "Will you not take the hair of

¹³⁴ Deepavali, Diwali, the festival of light.

¹³⁵ Lord Shiva named as Vishwanatha or Vishweshwara is called the King of Varanasi and His Shakti, in the form of Devi Annapurna, is the Queen of the holy city.

men? We too want to give our hair." Then on Ma's order four pairs of scissors were brought. The hair of the married, widows, girls and men would be cut separately. It was like a festival of hair cutting. Ma started the proceedings with me. The place under the Ashoka tree¹³⁶ in the Panchvati was earmarked for the married ladies, the spot under the Ashwattha¹³⁷ tree would be for the unmarried girls and under the Vata tree¹³⁸ for the widows and men. This was like a new festival beginning. Ma said, "A red pillow will be made of the hair of the married women, a white pillow with the hair of the widows, a yellowish pillow with the hair of the maidens and another pillow¹³⁹ with the hair of the men." Again Ma said, "A mattress will be made with the girls' hair, a pillow out of the hair of married women and side pillows from the hair of the widows." Immediately Bhupenbabu said "Ma, make a pillow for Your feet with our hair." Ma also said a few words explaining the significance of the pillows. People rushed to have their hair cut; some gave 25%, some 50% and some even gave 75%. At night Ma slept in the Annapurna temple.

This morning Ma took everyone along and visited Siddheshwari. She went to the door of Mukta's house to see her. Mukta is very poor and on top of that she has tuberculosis, that is why Ma paid a visit to her.

25 October 1938 Tuesday

Today also Ma remained in Dhaka. We are supposed to start our return journey tomorrow. Nobody seems to be getting enough of Ma. The feeling of when they would next get to see Ma was disturbing them. The ladies have planned to sing kirtan for the whole of this night along with Ma.

26 October 1938 Wednesday

The whole of last night there was kirtan. The ladies did the kirtan really well. At 2 a.m. when Belun, the daughter of Hirandidi and others began singing---

"Krisna Kanhaiya, Banshi Bajaiya, Gau Charaiya ha

re re re re re -----¹⁴⁰

it sounded very melodious in their naturally sweet female voices in the middle of the night. Ma also got up from the Annapurna temple and joined the ladies in the room where kirtan was being done. Yesterday the girls learned this Nama kirtan from Ma. The Nama kirtan continued ecstatically for the whole night. This morning no one returned home. The reason was that Ma would leave Dhaka

¹³⁶ *Saraca Indica*

¹³⁷ *Ficus Religiosa*

¹³⁸ *Ficus Indica*

¹³⁹ The name of the colour is omitted. By following the trend of the symbolic classification, we presume it was saffron.

¹⁴⁰ Oh Krishna, the flute player, tending the cows!

today. After they saw Ma off in the train they returned to their homes weeping.

27 October 1938 Thursday

Today early in the morning we reached Calcutta and went to the Birla Shiv temple along with Ma. O.N. Mukherjee's son Jaminibabu had been pleading with Ma for a long time to take Her to one of their established temples, and it was decided that we would go there this evening. It had been decided that Shree Ram Kamal Bhattacharya would sing kirtan there. We started off from the Birla Shiv temple at 5 p.m. Babu Shiv Prasad Singh has arrived from Allahabad. Attempts had been made to record Ma's words, laughter etc. over the last few years and this time it could be done. We tried with great difficulty to make 10 records; 5 of them were spoiled. It is not possible for us to plan anything in advance and so suitable arrangements could not be made. So whatever we had was accepted by us as a matter of good fortune. Ma had not gone for any pre-arranged recording, so we got what Ma does naturally. The recording was done according to Ma's *Kheyal*; sometimes there would be some talk, some laughter and sometimes songs. For us that itself is priceless. We went to the temple established by Jaminibabu in the evening after everything was finished. The idol of Ganesha there was very charming. Jaminibabu, along with his family, offered so much hospitality and service to Ma - and all of us. At their request we stayed overnight at the temple.

28 October 1938 Friday

Early this morning after the kirtan we returned to Birla's Shiv temple along with Ma. We are supposed to go to Navadweep by train today. At the special request of Jaminibabu we shall go back to his temple for the *bhog* at midday. So was it done and from Jaminibabu's house Ma was taken to the station. About 60-65 people accompanied Her. At dusk we reached Navadweep and proceeded to the Hetampur dharmashala. Before going to the dharmashala, Ma visited the Samaj Mandir. There She met Lalita Sakhi. She expressed great joy on meeting Ma and said, "It is my great fortune that today Ma has come to see Her daughter" etc. Dr Pant was with Ma and on witnessing the meeting between Ma and Lalita Sakhi, he said, "I have not seen such a beautiful meeting ever; my heart is thrilled and I am overwhelmed with joy." There was a lot of conversation steeped in *rasa*¹⁴¹. It was decided that the night would be spent in Navadweep.

29 October 1938 Saturday

Early this morning, Mejdi (Shachidada's sister, Manorama), adorned Ma with ornaments

¹⁴¹ love of God.

made by herself and dressed Her up as Shree Krishna, She was photographed. At about 11 a.m. we left from here and reached Howrah at about 3.30 p.m. Ma was taken directly from the station to the Botanical Garden and then on to the Birla Shiv temple. It was decided that from here we would proceed to the station. As of now it has been decided to go to Vindhyachal. Shiv Prasadbabu had pleaded with Ma to take her to Vindhyachal. Everybody decided to go to Vindhyachal.

At 8 p.m. we boarded the Bombay Mail for Vindhyachal along with Ma. Many people had come to the station to see Ma off. Everybody was gazing at Ma's face with longing. The train left at the scheduled time.

30 October 1938 Sunday

Today at 8 a.m. we reached Mirzapur. Shree Shiv Prasad Singh, Jitendada and others were present at the station. They made all the arrangements and took Ma to Vindhyachal. Bachchu and his mother have arrived from Kashi, and Kuladababu, Upenbabu and others have come over from Mirzapur.

31 October 1938 Monday

In the morning Ma took all the devotees from Kashi, Mirzapur and Calcutta for a little outing on the hill. About 20-25 devotees are with Ma. All are enjoying themselves with Ma in this hill station.

1 November 1938 Tuesday

Today, Shachidada, Juthika, Anu and Yatishdada's mother and wife have arrived from Calcutta. Shachidada has come on 2 days' leave. All others are going to stay here.

Today some people from Mirzapur have arrived and they met Ma at dusk. One amongst them asked, "Ma, there is so much of suffering in this world, how does it affect You?" Ma replied "Look, you are sitting here and so many people are coming and going, so many activities are taking place and you are only seeing it, as an observer. This is one side of the story." Saying this She kept quiet. Later at night when we were going to bed She spoke to me privately on this issue and said, "Look the answers do not all come out every time. Regarding what they had asked then about how the sufferings of the world affect Me, you know the reality of it? It is like having various parts of My body, hands and feet, and moving them. It is just like that. Sometimes, as for you all, this body is subjected to abuse, violence, ill feeling. You know how it affects? It is like scratching oneself with one's own nails. Hence with whom should I get annoyed? Again, there is no question of scratching. There is no second to the 'One'. Again when you say 'I-you', then you know how it is?"

He is present in all forms and this form of His is doing violence. That is why there can be no reason for anger or sorrow." Again during the conversation She said, "Everything is required, nothing can be neglected. You see, if we have to grow a tree or a creeper, we have to take help of some weeds or dried sticks. With the help of these the tree or the creeper can grow. Later on the tree or the creeper bears flowers and fruits. That is why it is said everything is required. At the same time nothing happens until the time is ripe. See, it is just like you may take a lot of care when planting a seed; even then you have to wait for it to sprout. You cannot just pull the plant out of the seed; you just keep taking care of it patiently and wait for the right time. Then only at the appropriate time flowers, fruits and everything can be had. Verily, patience is the mainstay of *sadhana*."

In the meantime, one day, She said to me privately, "This body has been subjected to many states. You know what I used to see? What I hear from you all about various Gods and Goddesses -- somehow they would all emanate from this body and again merge back into this body. What strange things used to happen! Those figures were so varied that I will not be able to explain it to you all." Stunned, I just kept listening. Like a simple child She kept saying all this, smiling all the while.

This time, in Calcutta, Govardhan's mother had come from Shrirampur. She said, "An extraordinary incident has taken place. A few days back a son of Govardhan's was nearly dead, and he was being laid outside the room and all arrangements were being made and people were ready to take him to the cremation ground. In the meantime Govardhan wept out aloud and said, "Ma Anandamayee, show Your power now, save my son, Ma." Surprisingly, after some time the breathing gradually started and bit by bit the son recovered. In the 60 years of my life, I have not seen anything like this. Perhaps nobody had witnessed how anyone can come back to life after being in that condition." Govardhan's mother made a special request for me to record this incident. During the festivities in Calcutta, Shree Jatindranath Panda had come over from Tarapeeth and he also narrated an incident with the special request that it should be recorded in the memoirs. He narrated as follows ---- "A few years ago Shree Ma had gone to Tarapeeth with many devotees, both men and women. One day Ma Anandamayee's *prasad* was being distributed and Shree Jatindranath Panda was hesitant about accepting the *prasad*. The reason was that according to the Tantra, a tantrik should not accept any left-over food from anyone, except his Guru. Moreover, although Anandamayee Ma is endowed with special power, yet it is not clear if She is the Devi Herself or whether She is a Tantrik or Vaidik, etc. Nothing is sure. On the other hand if someone offers *prasad* it should not be refused. Pondering in this way Panda left that place. Around dusk Panda fell sick and he felt strongly that his refusal to accept the *prasad* had caused this sickness. He waited impatiently for taking the *prasad*, first of all the next day. But the next day Ma sent the *prasad*

through Smt. Biraj Mohini Devi saying, "Go, give this *prasad* to Panda." Thus by accepting the *prasad* with all humility and reverence he got cured and the doubt in his mind was removed.

Ma never offers anything to anyone from the food offerings made to Her as *prasad*. Sometimes it so happens that while She is being fed a particular dish She would say, "Give this dish to so and so. Should whatever is good in it be only fed to this body?" In such a way She would give the *prasad*. Then again sometimes, before She accepted the food Herself, She would distribute it among others and then have it. Try as we may we are not able to make Her have the food before it is distributed.

Mornings and evenings Ma goes and sits on a sort of parapet made under the Shrine of Kharaushthi¹⁴² which is close to the Ashram. Kirtan etc is sung there by the devotees. Talking about the incident when She was dressed as Krishna in Navadweep Ma told me, "Listen, Khukuni, just as the asanas and mudras used to happen on their own, similarly the way to adorn is also not dictated by anyone, for whatever feelings manifest the person acts accordingly. It seems these things are necessary now and that is why everything is happening on its own."

2 November 1938 Wednesday

Today there is no incident to note. There are a lot of arrangements being made here but who knows for how long Ma would have the *Kheyal* to stay here?

3 November 1938 Thursday

This morning, Juthika and Anu were doing Nama kirtan at the Kharaushthi shrine and Ma also proceeded in that direction after coming down from Her room. But She did not go to where they were and being a bit naughty, She went and sat under a small Karamcha¹⁴³ tree. The place was dirty and there were thorns too, but since Ma sat there, everyone else also moved there. Nareshdada has come along; he and Bachchu are slightly displeased with Ma on some issue and were weeping. Ma called them and even then they did not come from their room. After a long time Nareshdada came but Bachchu still did not come. Juthika was also a bit upset, but on my consoling her, she went and joined the kirtan with the group. Ma Herself did the Nama kirtan for some time and we joined in. Later Abhay started the kirtan and we all joined him; Ma is sitting with Her eyes closed. After about an hour the kirtan was stopped and we came back to the room with Ma. Even by then those aggrieved had not calmed down. They still had tears in their eyes. Ma came to the room and was reclining on the bed. After a few words She said "You all laugh and that is why you make Me

¹⁴² a form of Devi Kali. This spot of the ancient temple is popularly called, "Kharashti Tala" in Bengali.

¹⁴³ an Indian berry of pink-white colour.

laugh and now that you all are crying, let Me also cry. Laughing and crying are all the same. Things will happen the way you all want." Saying this She kept quiet; many people were pleading with Her to make Her refrain from the resolve, but Ma said, "Come, brother, come." Saying this She lay down covering her face with a sheet. After some time She removed the sheet and started weeping like a child. There was no pretence in the crying, it was as if She was flooded with tears. Seeing Ma cry, others too started crying. The aggrieved party came and did *pranam* to Ma and mentally accepted their faults. After 15-20 minutes Ma opened Her eyes and while wiping Her tears She said in a laughing voice, "What is this, why are you all standing here looking at Me? What has happened?" Then again She said, "Laughing and crying are all the same; the way you all want you make it happen. I have laughed so much. The crying also starts on its own." Saying this She started laughing. For the whole day Ma's *bhava* seems to be far from normal. Some drastic change is in the offing and that can well be expected. All are worried not knowing what Ma is going to do. Some people present asked some questions but Ma replied, "I am the same as I always am."

At 11 p.m. everyone was in bed; as soon as Ma went out with Nareshdada, Juthika and I went to Ma. She said, "You all stay here; let me go for a short walk." It is She who was being looked after with so much care and who Herself submitted to the precautionary measures. But for the last few days She seems to be breaking down the restrictions bit by bit and a change in Her *bhava* is also slowly manifesting. She has caught a bad cold, but in spite of all this She just went out. We had no option but to remain in the room. We know very well that for some time She would keep to everyone's advice but again She would break all the so-called rules and regulations and would start out. Then it would seem as if She does not recognize anyone. At about 1:30 a.m. She called Abhay and spoke about something - Juthika had also gone there. Obeying Ma's order, I kept sitting in the room and watched. Ma left the room and sat at the Kharaushthi Tala¹⁴⁴. In this way the night gave way to dawn. Everyone started singing the early morning kirtan. Ma kept lying there.

4 November 1938 Friday

Today also Ma did not return to Her room. She said, "For some time I was having the *Kheyal* to be under the tree and I will stay here." That is why She spread a blanket under the tree and kept lying there. Others were lying around Ma on the slabs of stone. The middle of the day also passed in this way. We were worried as to what Ma would do and where She would go, knowing full well that neither bodily weakness nor any other reason will obstruct Ma's *Kheyal*. It was decided that tonight also Ma would spend the night under the tree.

¹⁴⁴ "tala" is a suffix in Bengali meaning a site, place. Connected to the name of a deity, it means a shrine, temple or holy place for the worship of the deity. Usually a holy tree is planted at such a site.

5 November 1938 Saturday

Babu Shiv Prasad Singh has just arrived last night. This morning we visited the Ashtabhuja and Vindhyavasini temples in his car. Ma remained sitting in the car. Those accompanying Her who had not visited the temples went for *darshan* in the temples and came back. While conversing in the car She said, "Wealth also has age, has movement; do you not see that it keeps moving here and there from time to time; initially when it was cast, it had its birth and again when it is melted down to form an amulet, that is its death - or it is said to have undergone a major change. So you can see that if you are associated with things that are subject to change, you would also be subjected to and remain in the realm of change."

As we were returning from the Vindhyavasini temple towards the Ashram and were coming to the place in front of the Hanumanji's temple, a topic came up about Ma's "friend". The story goes like this: in this temple there used to live an old *sannyasini* and as soon as she saw Ma, she would start scolding Her. The reason was that when Ma used to go to her she probably thought Ma was a householder accompanied by other householders, so it irritated her that Ma would sit with her at the same level and try to talk to her as an equal. We used to have a lot of fun about this. But the surprising thing was that as she went inside her room she would be scolding Ma, and when we would be engrossed in something else she would peep out of her room and observe Ma. This was often noticed by Ma and She used to point it out to us. This made the *sannyasini* flare up all the more. Often when the *sannyasini* would be doing something in her room, she would look covertly towards Ma. But as soon as Ma would observe this it would put her off and again the rants would go on louder. Ma used to tell us "Give her some money." When we used to go to give her the money again the abuse would start, but while Ma was leaving, she would come out of her room and keep watching Ma for as long as she could. She used to hurl abuses only at Ma and no one else. Ma used to have a lot of fun on this account. Bholanath used to call the elderly *sannyasini* "Ma's friend" and have a lot of fun. Now also Ma said, "Look, here is My friend's house."

Then the topic about the hair-cutting came up. Initially in Dhaka seeing the special care taken by two or three widows to do up their hair, Ma called me and said, "Look at this Khukuni. Instead of spending their lives as Brahmacharinis and trying to attain the Supreme as their spouse, they are spending their days in luxury and leisure." Saying this She made a face and like a child came out with "I feel cold; I want to lie down on a pillow stuffed with hair. Go ask them who will give their hair." Then the married women, such as Ganeshbabu's wife and Prafullababu's wife, volunteered. "We also want to give our hair," Bhudebdada said, "Ma, can we not give our hair? Make a pillow for your feet with our hair". Thus started the fun of cutting and donating hair. Pillows

were made and then God alone knows where they went! But the aim was achieved. This ritual of the *kumari* girls cutting their hair had begun before¹⁴⁵. I laughed at all this and said, "Ma, the ones who have given their hair, have they also given their heads at the same time like the Sikhs¹⁴⁶?" The question of going to Kashi came up. It was decided that we would leave for Kashi in the evening.

At around 5 p.m. in the evening we set out for Kashi in Shiv Prasadbabu's car. Others in the retinue travelled by train. Everyone was put up in Bireswar Pandey's dharmashala and Ma along with 5-7 people proceeded to stay on the river Ganges on a boat.

We hired a *bajra*¹⁴⁷ and accommodated Ma in it. It was decided that morning and evening, when the boat would be moored on the bank, the devotees would get her *darshan*. The joy of living on the Ganges along with Ma on a moonlit night is beyond description and a matter of good fortune for us. We passed the night joyously.

6 November 1938 Sunday

Early in the morning as the boat docked on the Darbhanga ghat a stream of people kept getting into the boat for Ma's *darshan*. After everyone was satisfied with Ma's nectar-like words and *darshan* the boat left the bank. It is said that one "Siddhi Ma" of this place is in a very high state of spiritual consciousness. Ma sent Abhay and Nareshdada to her. She said, "Go, visit My Mother." They were quite happy to see Siddhi Ma and on returning spoke to Ma about her. Ma is telling everyone, "You must go to places where you can advance your spiritual quest. With Me there is no restriction and you must only go wherever you think you could get that *ananda*." Some devotees had murmured, "Ma, why are you sending us to another mother?" Ma laughed and said, "Why do you all have such a feeling of differentiation? Everyone is My mother and father. Again it can be said that none of this exists; for Me, with all this together there is only One -- father, mother or whatever you may say."

One lady came and said, "Ma, if I get some fruit for you, will you eat it?" Ma laughed and said, "Well, I do not know if I have a separate holding for myself that I would eat only things from there and not eat anything given by others. I know only this: everyone is from the same house and if at all you have to differentiate then everybody's house is My house and there are food, shelter and all other things for Me there. Again when someone is asked to take something from here he/she may be reluctant, thinking it is not his/hers and I would say, 'your house is My abode, your box is

¹⁴⁵ with the Kanyapeeth girls.

¹⁴⁶ Here is a reference to a famous historical poem of Rabindranath Tagore. In the wake of the Sikh-Muslim conflicts, when a Sikh, captured and brought to the Muslim court, was asked to cut his hair and surrender it to the victor, the Sikh said, "I will give you something more. I will give my head too into the bargain." The writer jokingly asks if the donation of hair indicated also the donors' self-surrender to Ma.

¹⁴⁷ a large two-storey boat, a barge.

My box. All My storage boxes are in your houses (meaning their boxes) and in those you can keep the articles from here." Saying this She started laughing like a child. Again while laughing She said in rhyme:

"All are my friends.

They are pleased with the share they have got."

Saying this She was in peels of laughter. Today also we spend the day on the boat in great enjoyment.

7 November 1938 Monday

Today it is Chudamani Yoga¹⁴⁸. Many people from around the world have assembled here on the banks of the Ganges to have a bath. The eclipse would be after 2 a.m. We set out in the boat at dusk to go to Hariharbaba¹⁴⁹. Two big boats were hired for the purpose. There were so many people along with us on the boats that it became difficult to row them. At about 1 a.m. one boat ran aground. It could not be freed even after trying for an hour. We could not go to Babaji's place as the boatmen objected - saying that such large boats could not be rowed to that place. But we had already travelled a long distance. Everyone in the boats wanted to have a bath and it was necessary to get the boats to a bank of the river by 2 a.m. to do so. All along Ma could not rest as there were so many people with us. Due to the crowd it was squashed to sit in the boat in which Ma was travelling, but still people chose to travel in that boat - not wanting to leave Ma's company. As a result the boat became dangerously overloaded. After some time Ma came out of the cabin and stood on the deck, and surprisingly within 2-3 minutes the boat became freed. The boat was steered to one of the Ghats (river banks). Everyone had their ritualistic bath and continued with their japa and meditation etc. The eclipse lasted for two hours. The time passed quickly and it was dawn.

8 November 1938 Tuesday

Early this morning, to give some rest to Ma, the boats left the bank of the river and went into mid-stream. The boats were kept stationary there. We were sitting with Ma. At about 9 a.m., again the boats were steered to the Darbhanga ghat. Thus the days on the Ganges passed in absolute happiness.

9 November 1938 Wednesday

¹⁴⁸ a special astrological concurrence supposed to be very auspicious for ritual bathing, doing japa, etc.

¹⁴⁹ a highly reputed saint of Varanasi who always stayed in a boat on the Ganges

Today also we spent the day on the Ganges. I said, "Ma, some people say that all the Mahatmas belong to their own respective sects; they have given *diksha* to their followers and thus they have distinctive paths. Even some followers of these sects are highly evolved spiritually, but our Ma does not have any of this. Who in our group are so spiritually evolved?"

Ma said, "Look, why do you set different distinctions like this for yourselves? As you already know so many followers of so many renowned Mahatmas keep coming to this body and ask for help in their *sadhana*. You do not all come to know about it always; they often come in absolute secrecy to seek guidance and say, 'Nobody should be told that we have come here'. What to say; listen, such is the state of some that on not making satisfactory progress on their spiritual path, they want to commit suicide. Maybe some advice is given to them. As you know I do not say anything by My own will; you all get it out of Me through your will. On hearing the advice they calm down and practise according to the advice given. They return to say that they are now progressing steadily. But you know what the fact of the matter is? For this body it is all the same. It is not that if the people close to this body are shown how to advance they would get well-known, and if people who are close to the Mahatmas are helped this body would lose recognition. There is nothing like this here." Saying this She began to move her hands to and fro playfully and smiling, in a gesture of denial like a child. Again the topic came up about the fact that some Mahatmas declare the spiritual level of some people. Ma does not say such things. On this issue She said, "Look, what is there to say? In the body the hands, legs, fingers etc are in their respective places. Do I announce their positions? Do I say, My hands are there, My feet are there, this finger of mine is this long, etc? Be it any Mahatma or any creature, animal, bird and whatever else you say, they are but a part of the One and there is nothing beyond. So how can I say someone is at the top or the bottom? But if there is a *Kheyal*, it can only be said to the extent that this finger of Mine is a bit sore and the other finger is alright, that is all." Saying this She started laughing. She went on saying, "The views of Shankaracharya are also in agreement with the views of this body. All views are present here. There is free and unrestricted entrance for all; what else?" I said, "But incidentally the name of Shankaracharya has been pronounced" Ma laughed and said, "Yes, Baba's name was pronounced." After this She added, "The sum total of all is the sect for this body. Again within the whole differences do exist. The same exists in all forms, in all kinds and varieties."

10 November 1938 Thursday

From time to time Ma is in the *bhava* to remain quiet. Sometimes She is talking. Yesterday the highly revered Shree Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashay took Ma to his place in the afternoon. After some conversation She returned around 9 p.m. On Her way back She also visited Siddhi Ma. She is

known also as the "Ma of Khalispura." She is on a high spiritual level. Yesterday Ma sent a boy to her for *diksha*. During a conversation Ma said, "Look, whoever is to get whatever from anybody will get it. As far as this body is concerned, whoever is to get whatever from this body will have it even at a distance and it is not necessary to be close to get it."

11 November 1938 Friday

This morning we moved to a smaller boat from the bigger boat that we had been on, and Ma was taken for a trip on the river. Soon after that there seemed to be a change in Ma's *bhava*. The body seemed to be listless. This state continued for a few hours. Then She came back to Her near normal state but She seemed to be drowsy. She spoke about going to Vindhyachal today. In the evening we started for Vindhyachal.

12 November 1938 Saturday

Since this morning the top of the Ashram building is being demolished so that a double storey building can be made. Pointing out the scene She said during a conversation, "Look here, if you have to make something new, there has to be so much destruction, but the foundation remains the same - like truth. It stays the same eternally. Regarding the outer structure, there has to be some destruction and then it is to be rebuilt. Before something can be rebuilt such demolition is necessary. Then alone can you have something new." One of the devotees said "Ma, there is a lot of suffering." Ma said, "The suffering is for one's good."

Today also Ma has that drowsy feeling. In the afternoon She went and sat under the trees. In the evening She went out for a walk. We went for some distance and came back.

In the evening Shree Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashay arrived from Kashi. During the night he had a long conversation with Ma and the topic about the yogic kriyas, which had taken place in Ma's body, came up. The conversation was taking place at Kharaushthi Tala¹⁵⁰. There was this eerie silence of the hills that had deepened further under the cover of the night, and Ma was answering the queries. It seemed that the place, the time and the people had all merged into one entity. The conversation continued till about 11:30 p.m.

Gopinathbabu said, "Ma, after Jhulan Purnima when you had something like a *diksha*, did any change take place in the kriyas manifesting in your body?" Ma said, "But it was not *diksha*." Gopinathbabu agreed and said, "Yes of course it was not, but it can be put this way - 'The incident which occurred on that day....' etc." Ma said, "Yes, after this incident the 'asanas' and 'mudras'

¹⁵⁰ "Tala" singly means "under", "base", a particular floor (like ground floor) etc. Suffixed to the name of a deity, it means the place of that deity, which may be a temple, an altar, or simply the base of a tree as a holy site.

started happening in a particular way. Do you know what I used to observe during that time, so surprisingly? The breathing process almost used to stop for a long time. It was like acting as a novice in a play. The kriyas of *sadhana* were going on perfectly but in accordance with the initial stages of *sadhana*. In that state I used to tell Bholanath, 'During the time when you often go out for long durations, all this is happening to me. I stay alone at home,'" and then laughing She added, "You all talk about '*Kumbhak*' or something like it, do you not?" Gopinathbabu smiled and said, "Yes, Ma."

Then Ma said, "Then again during that Jhulan Purnima there was an unsteadiness in the body. I mentioned this to Bholanath also and then at night I had my food and came back." Saying this She added, "If it were *diksha*, could there be a question of eating food? I returned after having My food and told Bholanath, 'Listen, strange things are happening to My body, I am going to sit on the floor now.' Saying this I remained sitting on the floor. So many strange things began to take place. Similar actions were being performed as you all do when performing *Yajna*. Then the bija mantra that surfaced was also later written in the middle. Then with the same bija mantra oblations were offered. The bija mantra surfaced from within on that day and it remained constant for some days. Then many more bija mantras surfaced, and subsequently puja was performed with them, and they faded away. But the initial bija mantra remained even after the 3 years silence (*maun*) and used to be pronounced in the throat. Look, again during this period the japa would continue, even when placing the hand on the head, chest etc as prescribed." Gopinathbabu asked, "What was the state after the japa stopped?" Ma replied, "Then there was the state of a void." After this there was much discussion about the occurrence of the *diksha*; I would not be able to write all that in detail. Then, again Gopinathbabu said, "Ma, the other day when you were conversing with me in the garden at Kashi, who had gone there then? You said something like 'I will not go now'". Ma laughed and said, "Could you make out that someone in his subtle body had come there? Tell me what you saw." Gopinathbabu said, "Initially I did not notice but later I saw a sort of illumination." Gopinathbabu confessed to Ma, on Her questioning, that sometimes he could make out subtle forms, like the presence of astral bodies. That day he experienced an eerie yet thrilling sensation and Ma had asked him, "Are you feeling scared?" Similar things were talked about. Ma just said, "That day he who usually comes there had come again." Shankarananda Swamiji asked, "Ma, can he help us in *sadhana*?" Ma said to Gopinathbabu, "Try to remember the topic we were discussing at that time. Whenever there is a discussion on any sort of *bhava*, subtle entities connected to that *bhava* come and assemble there uninvited. Sometimes you would observe that the conversation gets animated; then you should understand that they (disembodied spirits) have come and joined into the *bhava* of the conversation and that is why the discussions get animated. While we are discussing the

topic here, they are here also." In the stillness of the night, and the splendour of the shining moon it seemed that everything around was holding its breath listening to the words said by Ma and enjoying the glimpse of Her divine beauty.

Ma, Gopinathbabu, Swami Shankaranandaji and myself were the only people sitting and talking at Kharaushthi Tala. I shall not be able to describe the experience of that moment. It could only be felt.

13 November 1938 Sunday

Today also at 8 a.m. we all went along with Ma for a walk. Only the people who have visited the Ashtabhuja Hill at Vindhyaachal know how great is the splendour of the place. After walking for some distance, we sat under a tree on a level piece of ground. Nepaldada also had just arrived from Kashi. Nepaldada said, "This reminds me of the *rishis* of the days of yore, the way we are sitting around with Ma in this open space under the tree."

Even today Shree Gopinath Kaviraj Mahashaya keeps on asking Ma questions on various issues. Since he is a deserving person, he can elicit a lot from Ma. I would not be able to adequately describe today's conversation also. If ever in the future Kaviraj Mahashaya writes anything about it, then only we would know the details. I am not competent. I am just writing a few words. While talking Ma said, "Look, Baba, after the *diksha* had occurred, whenever puja used to be performed there was nothing in the house for the rituals. But the puja did get performed strictly as prescribed with incense, lamps, camphor, food offerings; everything was well laid out. And you know what else used to happen?" She showed him a kriya and said, "Doing like this the deity associated with the puja would be invoked from this body and on completion of the prescribed ritual with this kriya the deity was made to merge back into the body". Gopinathbabu heard this and said, "Ma, exactly the same is written in the scriptures."

Then Ma said, "This was one of the things that happened. Again, the mantras would reveal themselves within this body - it could be seen clearly. You all talk of the *rishis*, the seers of the mantras; is it like that, Baba? Gopinathbabu said "Yes, Ma, it does happen this way." Ma said, "Many a time the word 'so 'ham'¹⁵¹ has come from My lips; even Khukuni has heard it." Gopinathbabu asked, "Ma, the mantras do reveal themselves from within one's self, and many a time instructions are received from outside the body; in what state does this happen?" Ma replied, "As I have just said, the associated deity appears from within and the prescribed puja was done; at the same time the manifested deity would appear so distinctly that the instructions and blessings

¹⁵¹ "I am He" ----- the fully expanded form of 'OM.' "so' ham" - compressed form of "sah aham"

given by the deity were clearly heard. How much should I narrate, Baba? This is endless." While saying all this Ma seemed to be entering into *bhava*. Gopinathbabu noticed this and said, "There is no point in continuing this discussion as Ma would get absorbed into *bhava* again. It would be better if She stays below on this plane." Ma said, "There is no problem. As I join you all in your laughter, in the same way, this is also merging with that *bhava*."

On the same topic She further said, "Look, when the kriyas would happen on their own, if I tried doing something by My will, there used to be total confusion in the body. Then everything could be clearly observed and I could see that My will does not have any power; the activities are performed according to the way He wants it. The kriyas of that *Mahashakti*¹⁵² were happening through this body and I could only sit and watch. This is the state of the observer. There was no confusion, no feeling of want or of discomfort. Whatever has to come out comes out, and if there is any attempt made to say anything that is not supposed to be said, revealing some aspect, the tongue becomes tied or two fingers are placed on the lips to silence them. Thus, how much can I tell? It is endless and there is no regret on account of not being able to tell those things, nor is there a feeling of shortcoming. There is no inclination or impulse from within to tell either. Hence there is no confusion. As you are striking¹⁵³ so you are getting the sound accordingly, that is all." Saying this She clapped like a small child and started laughing. At about 10 a.m. we returned to the Ashram. Ma seemed to be having a *bhava* to go somewhere and we are anxious not knowing as to when She would want to go somewhere. Shiv Prasadbhai, Jitendada and others have arrived from Allahabad.

For the last few days Ma has less inclination to drink milk, and She is breaking the restrictions imposed by Dr Pant on Her diet, routine and rest. Today also She said, "Khukuni, do away with all regulations. Whenever I get up I will eat then. Whenever I feel like going to bed I will go to bed; you all discontinue schedules. I want to lie down now." In a hurry I fed Her some milk. A Kashmiri lady devotee had brought some fruit; I gave some of it to Ma and distributed the rest. There were 2-3 tents pitched and as Ma went to bed, others gradually left for their tents.

So many arrangements were being made in Vindhyachal so that Ma would stay there for some time, and people are pleading with Ma that She should stay so that She can recoup physically. But it seems from Ma's *bhava* that She may not stay in Vindhyachal for long; there is no certainty when She will leave the hills. Looking at the special arrangements being made around Her Ma would laugh and say, "One cannot be sure of a single breath and there is no certainty where I will stay and for how long. Seeing all these arrangements makes Me laugh." Still the devotees are never convinced and do their best to look after Ma. Her body is quite weak, but we all know that this will

¹⁵² Ma contrasts *ichchhashakti* (personal will) against *Mahashakti* (the Divine Will).

¹⁵³ Ma refers to herself as a musical instrument.

not tie Her down and one can never say when She will just drop all these restrictions and move on.

14 November 1938 Monday

This morning Ma went for a walk and on returning She said, "Today we have to go down." Jitendada and Shiv Prasadbabu left yesterday; seeing Ma's *bhava* they had understood that it would not be possible to keep Ma here and they had pleaded before leaving that when She came down from the hills, She should visit Allahabad once at least. That is why Ma said today, "Check which would be a suitable train to leave by." It was decided to leave by the 7 p.m. train. Shree Gopinath Kaviraj and his daughter have been with Ma for the last two days. They could also leave at that time. In this way everybody will descend from the hills together. Abhay would stay with Shree Gopinath Kaviraj for a few days.

Before dusk we all came down. The ladies of Shiv Prasadbabu's household and the family of Shree Yatish Chandra Guha are with us. Together everybody boarded the train for Allahabad. The people going to Kashi went on their train before us. Then we left for Allahabad. We reached Allahabad at around 10 p.m.. Jitendada, Shiv Prasadbabu and others were present at the station. They took us to the *bajras* hired for us.

15 November 1938 Tuesday

Today Ma was feeling feverish; everybody is coming to the boat to meet Ma. This afternoon two local rich people came to meet Ma. I heard they were uncle and nephew (Kanhaiyalal and another). They said, "Ma, we have a place for kirtan and it is performed there daily. If you could come there we would be blessed. Once in a month we have kirtan for all the eight phases of the day¹⁵⁴." He dwelt extensively on how the kirtan is gaining popularity by the day. Ma replied, "Look, Baba, listening to your words is very enjoyable. It is a matter of great happiness that you are spending more and more time in kirtan. If you wish, you could gradually introduce something else. Before you begin the kirtan all of you could settle down, calmly and peacefully, and remember for sometime the God whose name you sing. Then start the Nama kirtan. Again when you finish, if you could all remember God in the same way you would feel calm and joyful. You could do this, say, for at least one day a month and then there is no harm if you gradually increase the period. At least once a month the ladies could get together at a convenient time and meditate, do japa etc. Similarly the men could also get together and meditate and do japa etc together. To tell you the truth, meditation is not done with effort; it happens on its own. Meditation reveals itself on its own. But

¹⁵⁴ Ashtaprahar - round-the-clock.

just as in order to be a *sannyasi* one has to adopt the discipline of *sannyasa*, similarly for meditation to manifest on its own, one has to undergo the discipline of meditation. But doing it and it happening are quite different." It has been decided that we would go for the kirtan at 8 p.m.

In the evening Ma was taken for an outing. She was also taken to Shiv Prasadbabu's house for a while. Together everyone is listening to Ma's nectar-like words. After some time Ma was taken back to the boat and en route we also visited the kirtan. Shiv Prasadbabu has got a tent pitched for Ma, but She preferred to stay on the boat.

Today an incident took place. The incident goes as follows: a very simple elderly lady used to work in Sangyadidi's house. She has come to Ma as She wanted to look after Her. Yesterday the old lady was in tears, needing to tell Ma about something. We told her, "Ma will listen to you later." But Ma said, "Khukuni, fix some time, do allow Me to listen to her, otherwise it will be your fault." That is how it happened; Ma alighted from the boat and was standing on the bank of the river. The old lady began, "Ma, some time ago while I was in Calcutta and doing japa, I saw a very handsome man standing. He had a white sacred thread around his neck, and it seemed someone was saying, 'Narayan'. I could see this clearly. Then suddenly I saw the form of Shiva; again I saw You, Ma, as You are and it seemed the boy Abhay was standing behind You. I was looking for a long time but unfortunately I did not look at the feet of Narayan and He did not speak to me." Saying so She started crying. Ma said, "Do not cry; always keep doing japa of your Ishta mantra." I also said, "Do not cry - look at Ma's feet. Ma has heard you and, look, She is now speaking to you. Calm down." Then the elderly lady calmed down. She did *pranam* to Ma. I suddenly remembered something. While coming from Dhaka in a steamer, an unidentified girl announced that she had *diksha* from Ma and this has been mentioned before. That girl did not know Ma. This was the first time she had met Her. She also said Ma had given her the mantra 'Narayan'. Ma also identified Herself as 'Purna Brahma Narayan'. Then this elderly lady has also seen the form of Narayan; who knows how these incidents are inter-connected.

Today Shree Pannalal, ICS, Commissioner (Allahabad division) and many more gentlemen arrived. A man was noting down many of Ma's words. Another man asked, "Ma, Shree Aurobindo Ghosh does not meet people all the time; have you met him?" Ma had not met him outwardly. Ma replied, "Does not a daughter meet her father?" Again one person said, "Ma, Ramana Maharishi is in the South of India; do you meet him?" Outwardly Ma has not met him either. But here also Ma replied as before. These words touched Shree Pannalal's heart and with folded hands he said, "Ma, we are dealing casually with you in so many ways,¹⁵⁵ please do forgive us." Seeing his reaction I

¹⁵⁵ meaning as if Ma were an ordinary person.

was reminded of the dialogue between Arjuna and Shree Krishna in the Gita¹⁵⁶.

Commissioner Shree Pannalal started weeping. Ma laughed and said, "Does a father tell such things to a daughter? You are talking as if you were not my own." He said, "No, no, Ma, I did not mean it that way." There was much more conversation. One person said, "Ma, one should invoke the Guru's *kripa* by working." Ma said, "The Guru *always* gives his causeless *kripa*. In fact, the Guru is within; the inclination to work is also due to the grace of the Guru and so it can be said that everything happens out of the Guru's grace. But there is also a state when the *kripa* of the Guru can be felt."

16 November 1938 Wednesday

Ma will leave today - this can be made out from Her expression, but She is not saying anything about where She will go. In the evening She called Jitendada and said, "Check which train goes where and when." Saying this She noted 3-4 names. Finally it was decided that Ma would leave by the train at 9 p.m. for Vaidyanath. Rumadevi, Mahamaya (this lady has come recently from Calcutta with us to render service) and I will accompany Her. Swami Akhandanandaji, Manoranjan (this bramhachari has also come recently from Calcutta with Ma) and a few others will leave for Vindhyachal. Ma said, "There is no certainty as to where I will go from where".

Everyone understood that trying to stop Ma would be of no avail; so they kept quiet. Akhandanandaji was visibly grieved, but since it was Ma's order, he accepted it as such and did not try to dissuade Her.

At 9 p.m. we boarded the train. Yatishdada's mother, wife and daughter Juthika, and also Pran Kumarbabu's youngest daughter Anu, had all come to Ma in Vindhyachal. They also joined us.

¹⁵⁶ vide Chapter Eleven, verses 41-42.

GLOSSARY OF SANSKRIT AND OTHER INDIAN WORDS

<i>Adhivasa</i>	Ceremonies performed on the eve of any auspicious function.
<i>Akhanda</i>	uninterrupted, unbroken.
<i>Aluni curry</i>	Saltless vegetable preparation. Salt is added after the dish is cooked and removed from the fire.
<i>Amavasya</i>	The lunar date of the new moon.
<i>Arati</i>	A devotional ceremony in Hindu worship with the waving of lights, incense etc before the object of adoration.
<i>Asana</i>	(i). Yogic posture or physical pose. Every posture corresponds to a particular state of m (ii). Small mat or carpet used as a seat by each person individually.
<i>Ashtami</i>	The eighth day in a lunar half month. The main day of Durga Puja, which is performed on <i>Saptami</i> , <i>Ashtami</i> and <i>Navami</i> of the bright half of the month of Ashwin (September/October).
<i>Ashtaprahar</i>	Round-the-clock.
<i>Atar (or itr)</i>	an especially delightful and precious oriental perfume.
<i>Attahasa</i>	uproarious laughter.
<i>Bajra</i>	a large two-storey boat, a barge.
<i>Bela</i>	wood apple. (aegle marmelos).
<i>Bhandara</i>	Public feast.
<i>Bhatiyali</i>	a boat song, sung by the Bengali boatmen whilst going downstream on the river.
<i>Bhava</i>	(i). State of being, inner disposition. (ii). Divine mood. (iii). Devotion for one's object of worship. (iv). Spiritual ecstasy, transcendental mood, generally emotional in nature. <i>Bhavas</i> usually occur at elevated stages of the path of <i>bhakti</i> .
<i>Bhog</i>	Food offering to the object of worship.
<i>Bibi (biwi)</i>	a word of Arabic origin meaning a lady, a married woman or wife. It is also a respectful address like "Madam." Among some people, it also stands for "sister."
<i>Bija mantra</i>	Literally 'seed mantra'. A mystic syllable which is, as it were, the seed of a particular aspect of Divinity. By concentrated, sustained repetition of the seed mantra that aspect can be realized.
<i>Bilva leaves</i>	wood apple leaves, offered in puja to Shiva and Devi and also to some other deities.
<i>Brahmachari</i>	A religious student who devotes himself to studies, to spiritual practices and to service, and observes strict celibacy.
<i>Brahmakund</i>	The Haridwar Brahmakund at the Ganga River is one of the four sites where drops of the Amrit, the elixir of immortality, accidentally spilled over while being carried by the celestial bird Garuda.
<i>Brahmatalu</i>	The top of the head, the seat of the highest <i>Chakra</i> , <i>Sahasrara</i> .
<i>Chalta</i>	a sour vegetable used for making chutney.
<i>Chandi</i>	(i) An epithet of Goddess Durga. (ii) An alternate name for Shree Durga Saptashati which is a mythological scripture narrating the stories of the Goddess Durga's battles with the <i>asuras</i> (demons) It contains seven hundred <i>slokas</i> . It forms a part of the Markandeya Purana,
<i>Charanamrita</i>	It is a custom to ceremonially wash (or rather dip into water) the feet of saints or deities. The water is then called charanamrita and is drunk by the people in the belief that power and purity are transmitted to them by it.

<i>Chapati</i>	flat, handmade bread. <i>Roti</i>
<i>Chhorda</i>	younger brother.
<i>Dandi</i>	carriage handled by porters.
<i>Darshan</i>	Sight, vision. One speaks of having darshan of a saint, sage or deity, which means to be blessed by his sight and presence.
<i>Dashami</i>	the tenth day of a lunar fortnight.
<i>Dassarah/Dassehra</i>	(i) <i>Dashahara</i> - The tenth day of the bright half of the month of Jyeshtha (May/June) auspicious for bathing in the Ganges as this is the day of the descent of the river Ganga on earth. (ii) Popular name for <i>Vijaya Dashami</i> , the last day of <i>Durga Puja</i> , when the images are immersed in a lake or pond.
<i>Devi</i>	Goddess.
<i>Dharmasala</i>	a rest-house for pilgrims. An Inn.
<i>Diksha</i>	Initiation into the spiritual life, effected through the grace of the Guru who represents the Divine. During <i>diksha</i> a mantra or one of the potent names of God is usually communicated to the disciple, who is asked to repeat it regularly and in a specific manner.
<i>Ekadashi</i>	the eleventh phase of the moon, considered auspicious for rituals like fasting etc.
<i>Gangajal</i>	Ganges water
<i>Ghats</i>	the bathing places on the bank of a river.
<i>Granthis</i>	knots of attachment and impressions (sanskaras) of past karma.
<i>Granth Saheb</i>	the central religious text of the Sikhs.
<i>Havan</i>	Fire Sacrifice, also called <i>homa</i> or <i>yajna</i> .
<i>Ishta</i>	literally 'Beloved.' The chosen deity one worships. <i>Ishta</i> is the particular aspect of the Divine with which the disciple will have to be in perfect communion before the Supreme Divine Gnosis becomes possible.
<i>Ishta mantra</i>	the mantra received from one's Guru for the invocation of the chosen deity.
<i>Jagatguru</i>	World Teacher, the Guru who transcends all sects.
<i>Japa</i>	Repetition of a mantra or a name of God, imparted by the Guru at the time of diksha (see diksha). The repetition, as one of the daily disciplinary exercises may be for a fixed or indefinite number of times. There are three kinds of japa namely vocal (<i>vacika</i>), semivocal (<i>upamshu</i>) and mental (<i>manasa</i>). The last is supposed to be the best. The sound should, as a rule, be inaudible to others. Japa may be done either without rhythm or rhythmically, following the natural rhythm of one's breath. The counting during japa may be done with the help of one's fingers in the prescribed manner, or with the help of a rosary.
<i>Jhulan</i>	a five day event that ends on the full moon day, or Purnima. Called the "Swing Festival", it is a celebration of the play between Radha and Krishna, swinging on a golden swing.
<i>Jiva</i>	Individual consciousness, monadic in character. It is conceived either as an eternal aspect of the eternal Brahman or as an artificial manifestation of the Brahman under the influence of <i>maya</i> or <i>avidya</i> , (ignorance of the true nature of Reality) and ceases to exist when that influence subsides through the supervision of <i>jnana</i> (see <i>jnana</i>).
<i>Jivanmukta</i>	One who has attained to <i>mukti</i> (Liberation) while living in the physical world.
<i>Jnana</i>	literally, knowledge. True Knowledge is immediate and represents the unity of Reality. Every other knowledge belongs to the category of <i>ajnana</i> .
<i>Kali</i>	a name of the Divine Mother. Kali is the destroyer of evil. In Bengal Kali Puja is

- celebrated during the dark night of the *Diwali* festival in the month of *Karttika* (October/November).
- Kakima** father's younger brother's wife,
- Karma** action, the result of action, as well as the law of cause and effect by which actions inevitably bear their fruits. Karma originates from the individual self in its ignorance functioning as an active agent. When man realises his own true Self, karma ceases for him.
- Karana Sharira** causal body.
- Kaviraj** Ayurvedic doctor (in Bengali)
- Kheyal** ordinarily a sudden and unexpected psychic emergence, be it desire, will, attention, memory or knowledge. Ma, however, has given the word a much wider meaning. She describes as *Kheyal* the incomprehensible acts of the Supreme, as for instance His dividing Himself in creation, etc. In Ma's case there is no ego to account for Her movements, feelings and thoughts. When She uses the word *Kheyal* with reference to Her own person, it must be understood to denote a spontaneous upsurge of Will, which is divine and therefore free.
- Khichuri (Khichdi)** a preparation of rice, lentil and vegetables cooked together.
- Kirtan** the chanting or singing of the names or glories of God. It may be performed by one person or by a group of people to the accompaniment of musical instruments, chiefly drums and cymbals. It is meant to be audible to others so that they may benefit by listening.
- Kriya** Creative Action. In *tantric* literature *kriya* is used in the sense of activity that is eternally associated with knowledge and leads to perfection, in which knowledge and action are found to be identical.
- Leela** literally 'play'. Movements and activities of the Supreme Being that are free by nature and not subject to laws. Vaishnavas explain Creation as the *leela* of God.
- Linga sharira** Subtle body.
- Loot** Hari-loot, meaning indiscriminate throwing of prasada in the name of Hari (God).
- Luchi** Small handmade bread fried in ghee (purified butter). *Puri* in Hindi
- Mahadevi** The Supreme Goddess.
- Mahamaya** The Supreme Power, the Prime Cause of all Creation. A name of Kali, the Divine Mother.
- Mandir** Temple.
- Mantra** a series of sounds of great potency. It is the sound representation of the *Ishta Devata*. Name and form are inseparable; if therefore, the name is instinct with life, the form that it represents is bound to reveal itself, provided the practice is intensive enough. A mantra is a word of power, divine power transmitted through a word.
- Mahapurusha** a saintly person, an elevated soul.
- Mauna** the practice of silence. It may either mean to abstain, from speech; or to abstain from signs, gestures and writing as well as from speech; or the complete stilling of the activities of the mind as well.
- Maya** The Supreme Divine Power by which the One conceals Itself and appears as the many.
- Mudra** Particular pose of the body as a whole or of its parts; representing the expression of a particular *deva shakti* (higher natural force). Without that pose the particular *shakti* cannot function. The performance of these *mudras* produces necessary changes in the mind or character. In Ma's case these *mudras* came spontaneously.
- Nama** name. Singly, it generally means a Name of God.

<i>Nama Ghar</i>	room reserved for singing Nama.
<i>Nat Mandir</i>	enclosure adjacent to a temple for performance of dance, music, drama etc. on religious themes.
<i>Navami</i>	the ninth lunar date, the last day of <i>Navaratri</i> .
<i>Padavalis</i>	narrative and lyric devotional songs composed by Vaishnava poets.
<i>Panchabhuta</i>	the five basic elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether of which the material world is made.
<i>Panchavati</i>	a grove of five sacred trees, namely pipal (<i>ficus religiosa</i>), banyan (<i>ficus indica</i>), ashoka (<i>Saraca Indica</i>), bel (<i>aegle marmelos</i>), and amalaki (<i>Emblic Myrobalan</i> , <i>amla</i>), with a platform in the middle. A panchavati is considered a congenial place for meditation.
<i>Path/Patha</i>	recitation (mainly of scriptures)
<i>Pranam</i>	obeisance. An act of surrender, indicating the sense of one's own smallness in the presence of the One to whom obeisance is offered. There are various ways of doing <i>pranam</i> ; the most common is to kneel down and touch the ground with one's head.
<i>Pranava</i>	<i>Om</i>
<i>Pranavayu</i>	vital breath
<i>Prasad</i>	food offered to a deity or saint becomes <i>prasad</i> when it has been accepted and blessed. It is then partaken of by the devotees.
<i>Puja</i>	ceremonial worship of the Hindus. Offering to the object of adoration various articles representing all aspects of oneself.
<i>Purnima</i>	full moon day.
<i>Rasa</i>	Love of God. Literally, taste or juice. It also means aesthetic or spiritual delight.
<i>Rishi</i>	Seer. The <i>Rishis</i> are said to form a class of beings by themselves, distinct from gods, common men, <i>asuras</i> (demons) etc. They are those to whom <i>mantras</i> are revealed.
<i>Sadguru</i>	True Guru, the enlightened preceptor.
<i>Sadhana</i>	spiritual practice performed for the purpose of preparing oneself for Self-realisation.
<i>Sadhu</i>	One who has dedicated his life to spiritual endeavour and is free from family and business entanglements.
<i>Sahasrara</i>	The one thousand petalled lotus, the seventh and highest chakra on the crown of the head, the seat of the Absolute.
<i>Salil Samadhi</i>	<i>Jal Samadhi</i> , internment in water.
<i>Samadhi</i>	A state in which the mind is either completely concentrated on its object of contemplation (<i>savikalpa samadhi</i>) or ceases to function and only Pure Consciousness remains, revealing Itself to Itself (<i>nirvikalpa samadhi</i>). It also means the burial place of a saint.
<i>Samskara</i>	Impressions, mental dispositions, psychic traces left in the mind after any experience. They act like seeds and have a tendency to germinate into action. These samskaras are often brought over from former births. They are burnt up when the Light of Supreme Knowledge (<i>jnana</i>) shines forth. <i>Samskara</i> in this sense means very much the same as <i>vasana</i> .
<i>Sandhya</i>	Specific spiritual practice performed daily as a duty at sunrise and sunset. The hour of midday is the third <i>sandhya</i> . Together, they are called <i>Trisandhya</i> . Midnight is the fourth and unusual <i>sandhya</i> specially important for Tantrik <i>sadhana</i> .
<i>Sandhya Kirtan</i>	Evening Kirtan
<i>Sankalpa</i>	resolve or wish for a particular outcome or an action.
<i>Sankranti</i>	the passage of the Sun from one zodiacal sign into another. Celebrated as a festival by Hindus.

<i>Sannyasa</i>	Renunciation. According to the ancient Hindu system it is the last stage of human life, in which a man has to renounce his family, possessions, caste, social position, etc. - in fact everything to which he is attached - and surrender himself to the Divine. Technically it is of two kinds, namely, <i>vividisha sannyasa</i> preceded by a sense of detachment from the world, and <i>vidvat sannyasa</i> , which is <i>sannyasa</i> par excellence, precedent to the dawn of Brahman-jnana (Realisation of the Brahman). The former is called <i>linga sannyasa</i> , in which certain rules of discipline have to be observed. The other is absolute freedom.
<i>Sannyasi</i>	One who has taken <i>sannyasa</i> (<i>vividisha sannyasi</i>) or one who has spontaneously become a <i>sannyasi</i> (<i>vidvat sannyasi</i>).
<i>Saptami</i>	the seventh day of the lunar half month.
<i>Sari</i>	the dress of Hindu women. A long piece of cloth worn round the body and passing over the head.
<i>Sarvanash</i>	complete destruction.
<i>Sashtanga</i>	Respectful obeisance made by the prostration of the eight members of the body. Also called <i>dandavat</i> (like a log).
<i>Satsang</i>	The company of sages, saints and seekers after Truth, either the physical company, or in an applied sense by reading holy scriptures or the lives and teachings of saints. Also a religious meeting. In its widest sense the practice of the presence of God.
<i>Shakti</i>	Power that in its spiritual sense is eternal and supreme and of the nature of consciousness. It is the moving power of Nature and Super Nature. In Hindu mythology <i>Shakti</i> is often symbolised by a divine woman or a female deity.
<i>Shashthi</i>	the sixth day of a lunar half month.
<i>Siddhi</i>	(1) Success; achievement of perfection. (2) <i>bhang</i> , an intoxicant offered with milk to Lord Shiva.
<i>Shiva</i>	literally "Good". A form of the Supreme Deity. The aspect of the Divine Personality that is associated with the dissolution of the universe. The destroyer of that which is unreal. Shiva also stands for the Supreme Being Itself.
<i>Shraddha</i>	rites performed for a departed soul.
<i>Sthitaprajna</i>	established in the Knowledge of Reality.
<i>Sthula Sharira</i>	Sanskrit term for gross body.
<i>Sukshma Sharira</i>	Subtle body.
<i>Tala</i>	a suffix in Bengali meaning a site, place or a storey
<i>Tantra</i>	a class of Hindu Sastras which are said to constitute the Scripture of the Kaliyuga ; a code of religious ceremonies, in particular for the worship of Siva and Durga. The Tantra Shastra is a development of the Karmakanda, the portion of the Vedas which relates to ceremonial acts and sacrificial rites.
<i>Tithi</i>	a lunar day.
<i>Vasana</i>	latent desire stored in the subconscious.
<i>Vijayadashami</i>	the tenth lunar date, the day of Victory.
<i>Vikalpa</i>	an alternative resolve or just an alternative.
<i>Yantra</i>	a Tantrik design symbolising a deity, carved on metal or crystal or painted on paper.
<i>Yoga</i>	literally 'union'. Various methods for realizing the union of the individual <i>Atma</i> with the universal <i>Atma</i> .
<i>Yogi</i>	one who practices yoga or has mastered it.



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